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RECOLLECTIONS  
OF  
THE LAST FOUR POPES  
AND OF  
ROME IN THEIR TIMES.

BY  
H. E. CARDINAL WISEMAN.

“Romæ nutriri mihi contigit atque doceri.”—HORATIUS.



LONDON:  
HURST AND BLACKETT, PUBLISHERS,  
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1858.

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NEW-STREET SQUARE.

## P R E F A C E.

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THIS work hardly requires any preface beyond the introductory matter contained in the first chapters; a few words, therefore, will be here sufficient.

Every reader will expect this Volume to present a view of the subject treated, different from what is presented by other writers. Tourists, politicians, lecturers, and newspaper writers, have given estimates of persons and events here mentioned, often contradictory to what they may appear in these pages. All that one can do in such a case is to require an impartial balance of evidence. Can those writers or speakers say, that they have been present, or have witnessed what they describe, or that they have taken pains to test and verify the hearsay evidence which they have accepted? At any rate, here is a writer's character pledged to the

sincerity of his views, and to the correctness of his statements. If inaccuracy in any detail have crept in, where the narrative extends over so long a period, this cannot affect views which result from the continued observation of far more occurrences than could be specifically described.

This is not a history, nor a series of biographies, nor a journal, nor what are called memoirs. It is so much of a great moving picture as caught one person's eye, and remained fixed upon his memory: that portion of it which came nearest to him, touched him most closely, interested most deeply his feelings. The description of all this he has endeavoured to give with fidelity, by recalling, as vividly as possible, the impressions which it produced at the time it passed before him, piece by piece. And let this sincere account of one witness have its place among the materials of a future historian, who may perhaps be searching for those, by preference, which proceed not from anonymous sources, or secondary evidences, but from such as write what they have seen with their eyes, heard with their ears, and touched with their hands, and who, at

the risk of unpopularity, fear not to subscribe their depositions.

It may be said, that a darker and shadier side must exist in every picture: there must have been many crimes within and without the walls of Rome, as well as of Troy, which are not even mentioned here; there must have been men of wicked life as well as men adorned by Christian virtues, who are not alluded to; much vice, corruption, misery, moral and physical, which form no part of our description. True; there no doubt was, and no doubt is yet, plenty of all this. But there is no want of persons to seize upon it, and give it to the public in the most glowing, or most loathsome colouring. Provided they really describe what they have seen, it matters not; let the historian blend and combine the various and contrasting elements of truth-telling witnesses. But to the author, such narratives would have been impossible. He does not retain in his memory histories of startling wickedness, nor pictures of peculiar degradation. He has seen much of the people, of the poorest from city and country, in the hospitals, where for years he has been happy in attending to their spiritual



wants; and he could tell about them just as many edifying anecdotes as tales of crime or woe. And as to wicked persons, it certainly was the providence of his early life not to be thrown into the society of the bad. He can add with sincerity, that later he has not sought it. His familiars and friends have been naturally those who had been trained in the same school as himself; and among the acquaintances of his foreign life, he hardly remembers one whose conduct or principles he knew or believed to be immoral. Had he found them so, he hopes the acquaintance would soon have been terminated.

His looks were, therefore, towards the virtuous; their images stamped themselves habitually upon his mind's eye; and the succession of these, forms the pleasing recollections of many years. Of others he cannot speak; and to do so would be, even if he could, uncongenial to him. Let the work then be taken for what it is, the recollections of four truly good and virtuous men, and of such scenes as they naturally moved in, and of such persons as they instinctively loved and honoured.

LONDON: March, 1858.

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Part the First.

PIUS THE SEVENTH.



# RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LAST FOUR POPES.

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## PIUS THE SEVENTH.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE AUTHOR'S FIRST ARRIVAL IN ROME.

It was on the 18th of December, 1818, that the writer of this volume arrived in Rome in company with five other youths, sent to colonise the English College in that city, after it had been desolate and uninhabited during almost the period of a generation.

It was long before a single steamer had appeared in the Mediterranean, or even plied between the French and English coasts. The land-journey across France, over the Alps, and down Italy, was then a formidable undertaking, and required appliances, personal and material, scarcely compatible with the purposes of their journey.



A voyage by sea from Liverpool to Leghorn was therefore considered the simplest method of conveying a party of ten persons from England to Italy.

It is not the purpose of this work to describe the adventures and perils, at which many might smile, of "the middle passage" and subsequent travel. It will be sufficient to say that the embarkation took place on the 2nd of October, and the arrival late in December; that, of this period, a fortnight was spent in beating up from Savona to Genoa, another week in running from Genoa to Livorno; that a man fell overboard and was drowned off Cape St. Vincent; that a dog went raving mad on board, from want of fresh water, and luckily, after clearing the decks, jumped or slipped into the sea; that the vessel was once, at least, on fire; and that all the passengers were nearly lost in a sudden squall in Ramsay Bay, into which they had been driven by stress of weather, and where they of course landed: and the reader, who may now make the whole journey in four days, will indulgently understand how pleasing must have been to those early travellers' ears the usual indication, by voice and outstretched whip, embodied in the well-known exclamation of every *vetturino*, "Ecco Roma."

To one "lasso maris et viarum," like Horace,

these words brought the first promise of approaching rest, the only assurance, after months of homelessness, that the bourn was reached, the harbour attained, where, at least for years to come, he would calmly devote himself to duties once more welcomed. A few miles only of weary hills—every one of which, from its summit, gave a more swelling and majestic outline to what so far constituted “Roma,” that is, the great cupola, not of the church, but of the city, its only discernible part, cutting, like a huge peak, into the clear winter sky—and the long journey is ended, and ended by the full realisation of well-cherished hopes.

To some, at least, of the first six who that day entered it, while the remainder followed more leisurely, Rome had been no new thought. Before any idea had been entertained of restoring the English College there, its history, its topography, its antiquities, had formed the bond of a little college society devoted to this queen of cities, while the dream of its longings had been the hope of one day seeing what could then only be known through hearsay tourists and fabulous plans. How faint must the hope have been of its fulfilment, when it involved a voyage thrice the length of one to America at present, and, with its additional land-journey, about as long as a circular sail, in a clipper, to New Zealand!

It has been written above, "*maris et viarum*;" for the land-ways were about as tedious and as perilous as the broad ocean path. For "there be land-sharks," or at least there were then, as dangerous as sea-sharks. At the little wretched hotel at Pontedero, the vetturino warned us, unfoundedly we really believe, to lock our doors; and as we communicated by pantomime more than by words as yet, he drew his hand across his thyroid gland with a most amiable expression of countenance. However, at Florence we were of course assured that the roads were most unsafe; and two evidences of this met our eyes, though they carried with them some antidote of comfort. At that moment the dense woods which skirted the road near Bolsena were being cut down to a considerable distance on either side, by order of the government, so as to destroy the cover of human wolves, and give the traveller a chance of preparing for his defence, should they come so far beyond their favourite retreat; for the bandit is naturally a prowler. But further, from time to time we passed tall posts on the wayside, not bearing along either the festooned garlands of the vine, or the strained harp-wires of the electric telegraph, both symbols of peace and harmony, but supporting ghastly trophies of justice avenged on the spot where crime had been

committed, the limbs, still fresh, of executed outlaws.

Long-standing desires, then, were about to be satisfied at last; and some degree of recent apprehension was going to be allayed, and welcome rest after long travel was promised; when, at the end of the road which looks straight onwards from the Milvian Bridge, we could see the open gate of Rome.

That noble entrance was by no means then what it is now. On the outside, the gates of the Borghese villa did not stand near; but the visitor had to walk a long way under the wall of the city, overhanging his path, till a narrow gate led him into a long close alley, the first of the villa. But within the Flaminian Gate, the obelisk indeed was there, as were the two twin churches beyond, closing, by their porticoes and domes, the wedges of houses between the three great divergent streets; but that was all. The sculptured terraces of Monte Pincio had as yet no existence; this was a green hill, scored by unshaded roads and chance-tracked paths to its more shapely summit. On the opposite side a long low barrack-building for cavalry formed a slovenly boundary to the ample square, in which as yet had not risen the lofty and massive edifices, hotels though they be, which now close its

specimen of what antiquarians call "opus tumultuarium," in the piled up disorganised volumes, from folio to duodecimo, that crammed them ; a refectory wainscoted in polished walnut, and above that, painted, by the same hand, with St. George and the Dragon, ready to drop on to the floor from the groined ceiling ; still better, a chapel, unfurnished indeed, but illuminated from floor to roof with the saints of England, and celestial glories, leading to the altar that had to become the very hearthstone of new domestic attachments, and the centre of many yet untasted joys ; — such were the first features of our future abode, as, alone and undirected, we wandered through the solemn building, and made it, after years of silence, re-echo to the sound of English voices, and give back the bounding tread of those who had returned to claim their own. And such, indeed, it might well look to them when, after months of being "cribbed, cabined, and confined" in a small vessel, and jammed in a still more tightly packed vettura, they found in the upper corridors, wide and airy as those below, just the right number of rooms for their party, clean and speckless, with every article of furniture, simple and collegiate though it was, yet spic-and-span new and manifestly prepared for their expected arrival.

One felt at once at home ; it was nobody else's house ; it was English ground, a part of fatherland, a restored inheritance. And though, indeed, all was neat and trim, dazzling in its whiteness, relieved here and there by tinted architectural members, one could not but feel that we had been transported to the scene of better men and greater things than were likely to arise in the new era that day opened. Just within the great entrance-door, a small one to the right led into the old church of the Holy Trinity, which wanted but its roof to restore it to use. There it stood, nave and aisles, separated by pillars connected by arches, all in their places, with the lofty walls above them. The altars had been, indeed, removed ; but we could trace their forms, and the painted walls marked the frames of the altar-pieces, especially of the noble painting by Durante Alberti, still preserved in the house, representing the Patron-Mystery, and St. Thomas of Canterbury, and St. Edward the Martyr. This vision of the past lasted but a few years ; for the walls were pronounced unsafe, and the old church was demolished, and the unsightly shell of a thoroughly modern church was substituted for the old basilica, under the direction of Valadier, a good architect, but one who knew nothing of the feelings which should

have guided his mind and pencil in such a work.

It was something however to see, that first day, the spot revisited where many an English pilgrim, gentle or simple, had knelt, leaning on his trusty staff cut in Needwood or the New Forest, where many a noble student from Bologna or Padua had prayed *in formâ pauperis*, as he was lodged and fed, when, before returning home, he came to visit the tomb of the Apostles; and still more, where many and many a student, like those now gathered there, had sobbed his farewell to the happy spring days and the quiet home of youth, before starting on his weary journey to the perils of evil days in his native land. Around lay scattered memorials of the past. One splendid monument, erected to Sir Thomas Dereham at the bottom of the church, was entirely walled up and roofed over, and so invisible. But shattered and defaced lay the richly effigied tombs of an Archbishop of York, and a Prior of Worcester, and of many other English worthies: while sadder wreckage of the recent storm was piled on one side, — the skulls and bones of, perhaps, Cardinal Allen, F. Persons, and others, whose coffins had been dragged up from the vaults below, and converted into munitions of war.

And if there was required a living link between the present and the past, between the young generation that stood at the door, and the old one that had passed into the crypt of the venerable church, there it was, in the person of the more than octogenarian porter Vincenzo, who stood, all salutation from the wagging appendage to his grey head to the large silver buckles on his shoes, mumbling toothless welcomes in a yet almost unknown tongue, but full of humble joy and almost patriarchal affection, on seeing the haunts of his own youth repeopled.



## CHAPTER II.

## THE FIRST AUDIENCE.

THIS second chapter, it may be imagined, ought to open with an apology for the first. For, what interest can the reader be supposed to take in its personal details? or what bearing can it have on the subject of this work? The first portion of this question it might be presumptuous to answer; the second is entitled to a reply. A writer who is not going to compile from others, but to give his own impressions, recollections, or opinions, who is not composing a history from other people's materials, but seeking to contribute his own share, however slight, to the stock of future collectors, is bound to establish some claim to the credit of his readers. If he cannot advance any on the grounds of past diligence or present skill, of careful observation or graphic power, he must at least endeavour to gain that right which casual circumstances and fortuitous position may confer upon him, to belief and attention.

Now, for any one born within the precincts of the present century to venture on giving his personal observations or recollections of nearly forty years ago, in a distant country, to assert that he had opportunities, from so remote a period down to the present time, of not merely hearing, but of seeing, what can illustrate the character of successive sovereigns on one throne,—still more, to begin his notes by stating that, within a few days of his arrival at its seat, he was familiarly in the presence of its occupant,—gives reason enough for a cautious reader to ask, how came this to pass, and what can justify belief in such an improbability?

It is the answer to this inquiry that has been attempted in the first chapter. Not in the garb of a courtier, bred in the palace-halls, not by the privilege of dignity or station, but in the simple habit of a collegian, and through the claim of filial rights upon a common father, was an early approach secured, to the feet of the good and holy Pius VII. It certainly makes one feel old when one counts one's life by five pontificates; but this is surely compensated, to a catholic mind, by the reflection, that each venerated possessor of that exalted dignity has shed his blessing upon one portion or other of its existence, from the buoyant and hopeful time of early youth, to

heavier and sadder hours. This unbroken continuance of a kindness, which amounts to a grace, requires a peculiarity of position that has no claim to merit, and therefore may be freely mentioned. The pages which follow will require this freedom, already commenced in the foregoing chapter; if so, let this one apology suffice for the volume. Nor will it appear unnatural, that a relation so established, between condescending goodness on one side and reverent affection on the other,—a relation which the reader may call chance, and the writer Providence,—should be found and felt by the favoured party to have exercised an influence on his pursuits, his thoughts, and the whole direction of his life.

The event to which the first chapter relates—the re-establishment of the suppressed English College, in Rome—was the work, almost spontaneous, of Pius, and his great minister Cardinal Consalvi. It may be not uninteresting to return to this subject hereafter. For the present thus much may suffice. Although a rector, and one fully qualified for his office, had been in possession of the house for a year, the arrival of a colony of students was the real opening of the establishment. On the day alluded to, the excellent superior, the Rev. Robert Gradwell, on returning home, found the first instalment of this important

body really installed in his house, to the extent of having converted to present use the preparations for his own frugal and solitary meal.

The event was of sufficient magnitude to be communicated to the secretary of state ; and the answer was, that as many of the party as could be provided with the old and hallowed costume of the English College, should be presented to the Holy Father within a few days. Among the more fortunate ones, owing to a favourable accident, was the present writer.

The feelings of any one permitted to approach that most venerable man had necessarily a colour and vividness beyond those inspired by his dignity and office. His history had been mixed up with that of the world, and its very anecdotes were fresh in memory. To the young especially, who remembered him only in a position so different from his natural one, as a captive and a persecuted Pontiff, who had almost learnt to disjoin the idea of the supreme rule of the Church from all the pomp and even power of worldly state, and to associate it with prisons and bonds, as in the early ages, there was the halo of the Confessor round the tiara of Pius, that eclipsed all gold and jewels. His portrait had been familiar to us, but it was that not of a High Priest, clad in "the vesture of holiness," but of an aged

man bending over the crucifix in search of its consolations, and speaking those words which had been made sacred by his constant utterance — “May the holy and adorable will of God be ever done !” Then had come the news of his wonderful triumphs, his humble victory, scarcely less astonishing than that of arms. He had been rescued from his duration not by the power of man, not by the armies that had almost hemmed in his prison, but by that higher will, that keeps in its own hands the hearts of kings, and turns them at pleasure. The same stern command which had torn him from his palace and borne him away, had set him free, or rather ordered his restoration. To this, indeed, had succeeded another danger and temporary retreat ; so that the final settlement of the Holy Pontiff in his dominions, and their restoration in their integrity<sup>1</sup>, had only occurred three years before, and bore the character of recent events. As yet indeed one might almost have said, that the triumphal arches and garlands of his joyful entry into Rome had scarcely faded, and that the echoes of the welcome cries that greeted him, still lingered among the seven hills. For the people all spoke of them as things of yesterday.

<sup>1</sup> By the Treaty of Vienna, June 9th, 1815.

It was not therefore to be "presented to the Pope," as the current phrase runs, that awaited us, at least in its ordinary sense. To every catholic, and to a young ecclesiastic of course in particular, this must be an event in life : and the ceremony combines a double feeling, elsewhere impossible, composed of the reverence paid to a sovereign and the homage due to the supreme Head of our religion. From the monarch we accept with gratification a condescending word, from the Pope, that word we receive as a blessing. When to the natural emotions thus inspired by the union in one person of the double rank of sovereignty and supremacy, we add the more individual sentiment which the personal character of Pope Pius VII. excited in our minds, it will be easily conceived, that our hearts beat with more than usual speed, and not without some little flurry, as we ascended the great staircase of the Quirinal palace on Christmas-eve, the day appointed for audience. This is a different entrance from the one now generally used. After passing through the magnificent *Sala Regia*, you proceed through a series of galleries adorned with fine old tapestry, and other works of art, though furnished with the greatest simplicity. The last of these was the antechamber to the room occupied by the Pope. After a short

delay, we were summoned to enter this ; a room so small that it scarcely allowed space for the usual genuflexions at the door, and in the middle of the apartment. But instead of receiving us, as was customary, seated, the mild and amiable Pontiff had risen to welcome us, and meet us, as we approached. He did not allow it to be a mere presentation, or a visit of ceremony. It was a fatherly reception, and in the truest sense our inauguration into the duties that awaited us. It will be best, however, to give the particulars of this first interview with the occupant of St. Peter's Chair in the words of a memorandum entered, probably that day, in the Rector's journal.

“ Dec. 24. Took six of the students to the Pope. The other four could not be clothed. The Holy Father received them standing, shook hands with each, and welcomed them to Rome. He praised the English clergy for their good and peaceful conduct, and their fidelity to the Holy See. He exhorted the youths to learning and piety, and said ; ‘ I hope you will do honour both to Rome and to your own country.’ ”

Such is the writer's first personal recollection of a Pope, and that Pope the illustrious Pius VII. Whatever we had read of the gentleness, condescension, and sweetness of his speech, his

manner, and his expression, was fully justified, realised, and made personal. It was not from what we had heard, but from what we had seen and experienced, that we must needs now revere and love him. The friendly and almost national grasp of the hand, after due homage had been willingly paid, between the Head of the Catholic Church, venerable by his very age, and a youth who had nothing even to promise; the first exhortation on entering a course of ecclesiastical study — its very inaugural discourse, from him whom he believed to be the fountain of spiritual wisdom on earth; — these surely formed a double tie, not to be broken, but rather strengthened by every subsequent experience.

I know not how a dignitary of any other religion, though holding no royal power and majesty, would receive a body of youths about to devote themselves to the service of his creed; nor whether he would think it worth while to admit them at all to an interview. But to Rome there flock, from every region of earth, aspirants to the ecclesiastical state, — in boyhood, and well-nigh in childhood, speaking as many languages as are attributed to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost; and yet perhaps hardly one fails to come into personal contact with him, towards whom from infancy he has looked up as



the most exalted person in the world. Soon after his first arrival he receives an early blessing on his future career, accompanied often with a few kind words, unfailingly with a benign look. That brief moment is an epoch in life, perhaps a starting-point for success. For the general attachment that united him with millions to the Head of his Church, there is established a personal bond, an individual connection. It is no longer awe and distant reverence, but an affection as distinct in character as that to one intimately related. And this relation is strengthened in the youthful mind at every succeeding year of his course. He knows that every professor whose lectures he hears has been directly and immediately appointed, after careful selection, by the Pope himself; that every class-book which he reads has received the same supreme sanction; he feels himself almost under the direct tuition of the Holy See: however pure and sparkling the rills at which others may drink, he puts his lips to the very rock, which a divine wand has struck, and he sucks in its waters as they gush forth living.

But does he, in his turn, preach in the papal chapel, in accordance with the privilege which may be exercised by each college, on some important feast? He is separately presented

to the Holy Father, and receives a paternal and gracious compliment. Does he give a public demonstration of his ability or application, by holding, as it is called, a thesis, that is, a joust against all comers to test his prowess, at the close of his philosophical or theological studies? Still more is he entitled, as the very guerdon of his success, to lay, at the feet of him whose doctrines he has openly maintained and defended, the printed articles on which he has stood trial, and hear kind and encouraging words, which compensate for his months of toilsome preparation, and his day of anxious struggle. Finally, when his career is finished, and he is about to pass from the period of probation and peaceful preparation, to the labour of the field, its burthen and its heat, he never fails to obtain a parting audience, at which he solicits, and obtains, a benediction on his future work. And seldom does it happen that he leaves the Eternal City without having obtained, at one or the other of those more special interviews, some token, direct from the hand which he kisses, — a medal, or rosary, or cross, which is treasured through life, and renews almost daily into freshness the associations of youth.

Nor does it seldom happen, too, that one finds one's self remembered from a previous interview,

and has a question asked which shows the kind tenacity of a memory through which things of higher interest must have passed in the interval. Is it wonderful that what is unmeaningly called "ultramontaniam" should increase on every side? For what in reality is it? Not, certainly, a variation of doctrine, but a more vivid and individual perception, an experience, of its operation. The "supremacy" is believed by the untravelled as much as by the travelled catholic. But facilities of access, and many other reasons, have increased the number of those who have come into contact with successive Pontiffs; and this has seldom failed to ripen an abstract belief into an affectionate sentiment. But with those who have continued for years under the same influence, unvarying in its winning and impressive forms, it becomes a fixed element, constant and persevering where all else may differ, and gives a warmth and strength to their religious and ecclesiastical convictions. The German student will carry away his Roman impressions, theorised perhaps in a more abstruse and transcendental form; the Frenchman will bear them in a more imaginative and poetical shape; to the English mind they will present themselves more practically, and as guides to action; while perhaps the American will relish

them the more keenly because they contrast so strongly with whatever he admires most in secular and temporal policy, and bear the seal of a distinct order of existence. But all, whithersoever they go, will belong to the school in which they have been educated, and naturally communicate their own feelings to many.

This chapter may seem to require an apology for irrelevancies, as much as the first. If so, let it be this. It shows how much more close, than may at first appear, is the bond which may unite a very insignificant person with the most exalted one in the world of faith, how many may be the opportunities of observation, and how vivid the impressions, which may give the one a right to portray the other.

## CHAPTER III.

## CHARACTER OF PIUS THE SEVENTH.

It would be difficult to imagine a countenance that more faithfully brings to the surface the inward character, or a character that more fully and undisguisedly displays itself in the features, than those of this venerable Pontiff. And it is not too much to say, that rarely has a more successful portrait come from the pencil of an artist than his by Sir Thomas Lawrence. This eminent painter arrived in Rome in May, 1819, with a commission to take the likenesses of the Pope and of Cardinal Consalvi; — the one as represented, the other as his representative, at the Congress of Vienna. It was not, therefore, altogether a personal compliment; for the two portraits formed portions of a series containing all the sovereigns, and their ambassadors, who took part in that momentous assembly. Most readers will have admired it yet existing in Windsor Castle.

But the writer had the advantage of seeing these two admirable pictures when exhibited, by the artist himself, under the same roof as covered their originals — the Quirinal Palace, and of thus judging of their accuracy. Among the multitudes who flocked to view them, there was but one opinion, that they were perfect likenesses, not merely such as copy the features, but such as transmit to posterity the expression, character, and feeling of the person represented. Of the Pope, of course, many portraits had been taken during the previous nineteen years of his chequered pontificate, but none that had approached to this, or gave him living to the world. Of the Cardinal this was the first representation from life. A friend of the author's called on him at the very moment that Sir Thomas was with him, on the 13th of May, presenting his credentials, and the Cardinal introduced them to one another. His Eminence said that he had always been averse to having his portrait taken, but added, showing him Lord Castlereagh's letter, "However, what can I do in this case? It is impossible to refuse."

Although the eyes of Italian critics were open to the characteristic defects of Sir Thomas's manner, and naturally blamed his apparent negligence in secondary parts, and neglect even of accuracy in accessories, the heads were acknow-

ledged to be faultless, and brilliantly successful.<sup>1</sup> The pose of the body, sunk unelastic into the chair, and seeking support from its arms, the wearied stoop and absence of energy in the limbs and head, tell us of seventy-seven years, among which had been some of calamity and grief. And yet the hair, scarcely bearing a trace of time, or of that more violent hand which often has been known to do in one night the work of years, but black and flowing, the forehead still smooth and unfurrowed by wrinkles, the mouth not dragged down, but cleanly impressed with a habitual smile, show the serene and enduring mind with which the vicissitudes of a long life had been passed, a life of rare passages and changes,—from a noble home to a cloister; from the cowl to the mitre; from the bishopric to the See of Peter; then from the palace to the dungeon; and now, at last, again from Savona to Rome. That there should be lassitude, and even feebleness, marked in that frame and on that countenance, can excite no wonder; but that there should be not one symptom of soured temper, or bitter recollection, or unkind thought, nay, not even of remembered humiliation and anguish, is proof not only of a sweet disposition,

<sup>1</sup> It is from this portrait that the head is copied in this volume.

but of a well-tutored and well-governed mind, and of strong principles capable of such guiding power.

The life of a sovereign generally dates from his accession to the throne. It is by reigns that the world's history is written. The man is nothing to mankind, the king everything to the nation. What he was before the commencement of his royal career is scarcely recorded or faintly remembered; for it is not taught to children. To have a place for anterior honours in his country's annals he must die before reaching that throne which will eclipse them all. A Black Prince, or a Princess Charlotte, had the best friend to their early fame in death. A royal crown will cover over and hide an immense quantity of laurels.

*" Scire piget, post tale decus, quid fecerit ante "*

is as true of a coronation as of Scævola's exploit.

Hence, in general, there is very little curiosity about the antecedents of the successor to the pontifical throne, although they may be very important for estimating subsequent character. This is certainly the case with Pius VII. That he was a man so meek and gentle, so incapable of rancour or resentment, that Cardinal Pacca scruples not to apply to him the inspired words



descriptive of Moses, "that he was the mildest of men," no one has ever questioned. This particular quality may be called the very grace of his nature, so distinctly was it stamped on his outward appearance, so penetratingly diffused through the actions of his life.

No one, moreover, will refuse to him that strength which is the companion often of the gentlest disposition, a power of unrepining endurance, the patient fortitude which suffers without complaint and without sullenness.

But qualities of a much higher order belong to him, and yet have been often overlooked. Nor has the course of his earlier life been sufficiently brought forward, to explain or illustrate the peculiar character which he afterwards displayed.

The basis of this must be considered as deeply laid in the very first inspirations of childhood. If nature gave to Barnabas Chiaramonti a mild and sweet disposition, a higher influence bestowed upon him a better gift. Religion invested him with the beauty of an unsullied life, with a character of irreproachable virtue throughout his length of days. Few families in Europe are more illustrious than his; but, while from his father he derived high nobility, from his mother, daughter of Marchese Ghini,

he received a more valuable portion, that of a rare piety and virtue. She was, indeed, a lady of singular excellence, renowned in the world for every religious quality. After having completed the education of her children, when the future Pontiff had reached the age of twenty-one, in 1763, she entered a convent of Carmelites at Fano, where her memory is still cherished, and where she died in 1771, at the age of sixty. It was in this retreat, that, as Pius himself used to relate, she distinctly foretold him his elevation one day to the papacy, and the protracted course of sufferings which it would entail.<sup>1</sup>

These earliest impressions of domestic examples and maternal teaching formed, as has been said, the very groundwork of Pius's character. At the age of sixteen, after a preliminary educa-

<sup>1</sup> The archdeacon Hyacinth Ignatius Chiaramonti, brother of Pius, published, in 1786, and dedicated to him, then cardinal, a Latin poem, "*De majorum suorum laudibus*," in which he thus addresses their mother:—

"O semper memoranda parens! O carmine nostro  
Non unquam laudata satis! me despice clemens,  
Exutumque tibi mortali corpore junge:  
Sit, precor, hæc merces, nostrorum hæc meta laborum."

I remember it used to be said at Rome, and I have read the same assurance since, that only the resolute opposition of the son, when elevated to the supreme pontificate, prevented the more solemn recognition, by beatification, of the extraordinary sanctity of the mother.

tion in the college for nobles at Ravenna, he retired, upon mature deliberation, to the Benedictine Abbey of Santa Maria del Monte, near Cesena, his native city. There could be no worldly motive for this step. He had nothing to fly from in his home. His birth and patrimony secured him earthly comfort. If he inclined merely to the ecclesiastical life, all its advantages were open to him as a secular priest, without separation from his family, in which he was well beloved. And certainly, if honourable promotion had been, even slightly, an object of his ambition, he was cutting off every chance which his connections, or his efforts, might have secured him in the secular state.

A twofold discipline, preparatory to his future life, such as Providence had designed it, awaited him in the cloister.

The first was the discipline of the monastic noviciate, the sinking of all rank and title, the renouncing of all fortune, luxury, money; the voluntary descent to a level of rude equality with the peasant's or artisan's son; the surrender of comforts in every change,—passing from the paintings and tapestries of the ancestral palace to the bare corridors of the monastery, from the chatty society of the table to the silent feeding of the body in the refectory, from the

neat chamber, with its elastic bed and damask curtains, to the whitewashed cell with its straw pallet and plank shutters; the menial occupations of a household, being one's own servant, and doing everything for one's-self; and finally the utter subjection of time, actions, will, to the guidance of rule and of obedience, with ready cheerfulness. For if one sees the youthful aspirants to the religious institutes here or abroad, in recreation or at study, he may easily decide who will persevere, by a very simple rule. The joyous faces, and the sparkling eyes, denote the future monks far more surely than the demure looks and stolen glances.

. In the days of Pius's distress, all his previous discipline came admirably to his aid. He had commenced it at sixteen, had dropped his high-sounding names of Barnabas Chiaramonti for simple Don Gregory (first, indeed, only Brother); made but one of a party, clothed alike, and without distinction, beyond that of the assumed monastic name. He walked the streets, and was jostled in crowds, and probably could not have paid for a cool refreshment. It was in this way that he hastened to the square of St. Peter's to witness the coronation of Clement XIV. This imposing ceremony is performed in the *loggia*, whence the Pope gives his benediction, looking into the

superb esplanade densely thronged. Eager to get a look at the spectacle, and clear himself of the throng that elbowed him, he leapt up behind an empty carriage. The coachman turned round, but instead of resenting this intrusion on his dominions, said, good-naturedly, to him, "My dear little monk, why are you so anxious to see a function which one day will fall to your lot?"<sup>1</sup>

The sincerity of this vocation was fully tried. Pope Pius VI., his immediate predecessor, was a great friend of the family. Wishing to promote to high dignity some one belonging to it, he selected another brother, Gregory, whom he called to Rome, and placed in the "Ecclesiastical Academy," an establishment for the education of youths preparing for public life. This preference, due to the choice made by Barnabas of the monastic state, cut off all hopes of his preferment, had they ever existed in his mind. The title of abbot was all that the Pope himself could procure for him, with some difficulty, in the way of honour and distinction.

It will be easy to trace the influence of this severe and early schooling upon the conduct of Pius in his days of hardship and sorrow. He

<sup>1</sup> The authority for this anecdote is the Pope's learned secretary, Monsignor Testa, who told the author he had heard it from the Pope.

was as a man already acquainted with these things. A condition which might have embarrassed him, or worn him down, or added to the weight of public griefs the petty annoyances that tease and fret more than those oppress, presented to him analogies with what he had used himself to, and was treated with comparative lightness of heart.

When he was suddenly and rudely forced from his palace in the night of June 6, 1809, thrust into a carriage, and whirled away through the dust and heat of an Italian summer-day, without an attendant, "without linen — without his spectacles;" fevered and wearied, he never for a moment lost his serenity. "Nos deux voyageurs" (Pius VII. and Cardinal Pacca), "répondent à mes procédés pour eux, et rient quelquefois avec nous;" writes General Radet, in a letter brutal and vulgar in its tone, addressed to General Miollis, the morning after the first day's distressing travel.<sup>1</sup> Nay, Cardinal Pacca amusingly tells us, that, when they had just started on this most dismal of journeys, the Pope asked him if he had any money. The secre-

<sup>1</sup> Published in Chevalier Artaud's *Life of Pius VIII.* p. 295. It had only come to light about 1844. This letter is alluded to in the same General's apologetic epistle to Pius VII., dated September 12th, 1814, published at the end of Cardinal Pacca's *Memoirs*.

tary of state replied, that he had had no opportunity of providing himself. "We then drew forth our purses," continues the cardinal, "and notwithstanding the state of affliction we were in at being thus torn away from Rome, and all that was dear to us, we could hardly compose our countenances, on finding the contents of each purse to consist — of the Pope's, of a papetto (10*d.*), and of mine, of three grossi (7½*d.*). We had precisely thirty-five bajocchi between us. The Pope, extending his hand, showed his papetto to General Radet, saying, at the same time, "Look here — this is all I possess." <sup>1</sup> Truly, "ils rient quelquefois avec nous." A good joke i' faith: a monarch smiling at finding himself penniless, and the man to whom he smiles sees no beauty or sublimity in the smile, nor in the simple words which explain it—no! it is only a proper item for an official report, as showing how completely he has done his work.

<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Pacca's Memoirs, Sir G. Head's translation. Many inaccuracies occur in the translation, both of Italian and of Latin. For example, vol. ii. p. 302: "Illustrious is that name in the *festivals* of the Church." No doubt (I have not the original at hand) the word in Italian is *fasti* (annals), not *feste* (festivals). Page 333: "the words of the Dr. Massimo S. Girolamo" should be "of the greatest of doctors St. Jerom." Page 157, 'Tertullian's words: "Novi pastores in pace leones, in prælio cervos," are rendered by "New pastors," for "I have known," to govern *cervos*. Thus *knew* and *new* are both represented in Latin by *novi*.

So much for money and any care about it. The august traveller was without even a change of clothes, or of linen. And later still, when no longer in the hands of men like Radet, he was in possession of only one dress, a stuff cassock, given to him by the King of Spain, totally unsuited to the season in which he was obliged to wear it. This he mentioned to a friend, an Englishman, at Rome, in 1820, from whom I derive the statement. Indeed, those who have desired to lower him before the world, have dwelt particularly on the want of dignity which they discovered in his performing for himself common menial services, and even mending his own garments. They have set him down for this, as a craven and poor-spirited creature, endowed with no sense of honour, pride, or self-respect.

There can be no doubt that in all this, there is nothing dramatic, nor in the vulgar sense heroic. Such a prisoner, such a captive, creates no scenes, gives no impassioned pictures for the pencil or the pen. You cannot invest him with the pathos of St. James's or the Temple<sup>1</sup>, nor get soft or tender speeches, or dialogues, out of him; nor — with the dignity of two hundred and fifty-three Pontiff predecessors on his head,

<sup>1</sup> Charles I. and Louis XVI.



with the privileges of the first fisherman, whose ring he wore, inseparable from his very title, and with the firm conviction, or rather consciousness, that he held the very thunder of spiritual might undivided in his hands, from Him whose vicar his captors owned him to be,—can one outburst of noble scorn, as the world would call it, one blighting defiance, one solemn appeal to the faith, however drugged to sleep, of those around him, be detailed, or really be discovered, among the records of his captivity. Romance or poetry could not presume to seize on it, as they have done on Duguesclin's, or Surrey's, or King Richard's. For there is nothing that the imagination can feed on, or enlarge, or elevate. It is the entire simplicity, naturalness, and unaffected submission to the will of God, without an effort to excite sympathy, diminish severity, or strike out an effect, that makes the singular beauty of this touching episode.

In the history of the first Charles, it is recorded that when brought to Windsor, on his way to trial and execution, he was for the first time deprived of the kingly state, with which he had been served, even during his previous captivity. "This absence of ceremony," says Lingard, "made on the unfortunate monarch

a deeper impression than could have been expected. It was, he said, the denial of that to him, which by ancient custom was due to many of his subjects, and rather than submit to the humiliation, he chose to diminish the number of the dishes, and to take his meals in private.”<sup>1</sup>

I remember reading, many years ago, the narrative written by an Infanta of Spain<sup>2</sup>, of her expulsion or flight from Madrid: and recollect being struck by the pathetic terms in which she records the day whereon, for the first time in her life, she took her meal off earthenware, feeling it an immense hardship for one who had never before, since her birth, eaten from anything less costly than gold plate.

It is in strong contrast with such examples of pitiful murmuring, that the uncomplaining and cheerful traveller from Rome to Savona stands. For, indeed, he had been trained for privation and suffering. “Behold they who are clothed in soft raiment are in the houses of kings.” Such was the royal Stuart, such was the gentle Bourbon. But Pius had been educated in the rough habit, and with the plain diet of the monk, in fastings often, and in watchings, and in many trials of subjection and obedience.

<sup>1</sup> Lingard's E. H., Charles I., ch. iii. 5th ed.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards Queen of Etruria.

It is not difficult to live over again our earlier life: the officer easily plays the soldier in battle, a painter never forgets how to sketch. And so the monk, in his simplicity and habits of endurance, had lived in Pius through episcopacy, cardinalate, and papacy. During the first two he had not even changed the colour of his robes, symbolical of a mourning and penitential life. Nor had the tiara obliterated the religious crown, shaven on the day of his clothing as a child of St. Benedict, in symbol of that thorny crown which sovereign and monk are equally called to wear. Old as he now was, the days easily came back, when he was girded by another, and led whither this one willed; when his wardrobe was scanty and scarcely his own, and when he had no servant at his beck; but knew well how to serve himself, and, if needful, others. "Redire in naturam puerorum," to become as little children, is more difficult for a grown man, than it was for a sovereign like Pius to return to his noviciate, whether he was cooped up in a tight well-closed carriage on the road to Radicofani, or in a prison on the Mediterranean. It is surely a proof of great stolidity in the general to write, speaking of this journey: "Je les tiens comme en cage," forgetting that a carriage, though locked up, does not make, any more than "iron bars, a cage;"

and not to put another reading on the occasional smile of his prisoners than he did, and write instead ; “ ils se rient parfois *de nous*.”

In fact, this previous life of absolute abandonment to the care of Providence, of total ignorance whence the very necessities of life were provided, but of certainty that something would be found, the day-by-day attention to spiritual or intellectual things, without domestic solitudes or secular cares, that had filled up the monastic period of the Pope's life, was only the practical illustration of a principle which his early piety taught him at his mother's knee, of reliance on God, and simple surrender to His will. Thus ripened and strengthened, the principle must have become one of boundless trustfulness and unshaking faith. It was a confidence, without anxiety, in Him who feeds the fowls of the air and clothes the grass of the field. But under what circumstances? It was a trust in Him who bountifully caters for the sparrow, indeed ; but felt and expressed when the poor bird was actually in the kite's claws. It was a hope in Him who arrays His lilies more splendidly than Solomon in all his glory ; but sure and full, when the scythe was already levelled by the mower, bending to the stroke.

Hence the captivity of Pius VII. is no drama,

nor is he a hero. For each is more. The one is a holy history, a sacred episode in the annals of the Church, ay, and in those of human virtue. It is changing the light of a picture, taking it out of the glaring and garish brightness of midday into a darker and cooler evening atmosphere. All around is subdued and still, and the colouring becomes mellow, and small details almost disappear, and even the expression looks more placid and yet graver. But every feature is there, and the character is unchanged: the same the smile, the same the tender eye, the same the speaking lip. No grand peculiarities are developed: the beauty is the absence of change. And he who is said to be no hero is much more. There is something almost awful in the unruffled calm which pervades the narrative of nearly continuous imprisonments in the latter portion of the Acts. St. Paul is confined at Philippi and Jerusalem, Cæsarea and Rome, warily guarded, as an important person, now by sea and now by land. But it is all given as a matter of course. No particulars of the gaol, no description of the dungeon, scarcely an incident of years spent by him, girt with a chain, or in free custody. Above all, no account of how he bore it; none of his looks, his words, his sufferings; none of his patience, his cheerfulness, his prayer, his

union with Christ. We are supposed to understand all this, and not to require telling that St. Paul in the stocks of the inner dungeon of Philippi, singing God's praises, was the same as St. Paul speaking with noble courage before Festus; that it was the privilege of the apostolic character to be as serene in a dungeon as gracious on the episcopal chair. And so, in course of time, when the lesser details and spare anecdotes of Pius's captivity shall have been first diluted, then melted away in the growing mass of historical material, the writer of his abridged life will find it sufficient to say that he bore his captivity, its perhaps unintentional rigour, its accidental aggravations, and its occasional insults, as became his high dignity and noblest inheritance, and in the character and spirit of an apostle.

If the monastic training prepared the Pontiff for one most important portion of his pontifical duties, as particularly destined for him by Divine Providence, it did not fail in another, and no less momentous, point.

It has been a generally received opinion, at least one has heard it again and again expressed, that the qualities of the heart prevailed in Pius VII. to the almost exclusion of intellectual gifts. Kindness and benevolence, forgivingness and meekness, have been the characteristics by

which he has been generally known, and for which he has been universally esteemed. But, however remarkable this gentleness of nature, it was by no means an usurper of his entire character. Though not possessed of genius, nor of over-average abilities perhaps, what he had were fully cultivated and vigorously employed. It is far from being the object of this work to reproduce matter already published, or load its pages by long quotations. It will be, therefore, sufficient to refer to Cardinal Pacca's excellent memoirs for a fuller explanation on this subject. He traces, indeed, to this mistaken apprehension of the Pope's character, the afflicting collision which ensued between the two greatest spheres of spiritual and of temporal power, — the see of Rome and the empire of France. But one sentence says so much to our present purpose, and will spare so much less authoritative treatment of the subject, that it will be well to quote it. After remarking that, having been associated with the Pontiff under such varieties of situation, it would have been impossible for his character to have remained disguised from him, the cardinal thus proceeds:—"Having, therefore, attentively studied his character, and well knowing his disposition, I can affirm that Pius VII. was a man by no means deficient in talent, nor of weak, pusilla-

nimous nature. On the contrary, he was a man of ready wit, lively, more than commonly versed in the sacred sciences, and especially possessed of that peculiar description of good sound sense that in matters of business intuitively perceives the difficulties to be overcome, and sees everything in its proper light.”<sup>1</sup>

With these words before me, it would scarcely have been too much to attribute to Pope Pius a higher class of abilities than has been just assigned him. But it is more to the purpose to state how they were cultivated. D. Gregory Chiamonti began young, and therefore was able to pass with deliberate leisure through the long and full monastic course of philosophical and theological studies. That he did this with at least fair success is evident, from the fact of his having publicly sustained a thesis in theology — an experiment not usually accorded to persons of inferior skill. The propositions or programme of his public contest were engraved, as the custom used to be, at the foot of a large allegorical print; and the thesis was dedicated to Cardinal Ganganelli. Thus two future popes met together, the one as patron and the other as client, on the noble field of science. A copy of this challenge

<sup>1</sup> Vol. ii. p. 43.



was, I know, in the English College library; it was curious, and made itself remembered by the circumstance that one of the subjects proposed in it was the confutation of an absurd fanatic, who had maintained that no place is found in heaven for the daughters of Eve. And this was only one of many occasions in which he made public display of his learning and ready prowess.

After this he was public professor in the colleges of his order, first at Parma, then at Rome. At the age of thirty he was promoted, in general chapter, lector or doctor of theology; and for six years more held the chair of canon law. It would have been impossible, in such a body as the Benedictines of that period in Italy, for any one to have been thus promoted, and intrusted with the highest teaching, unless he had proved himself fully competent. Not only must he have given evidence of his proficiency in the sciences which he was appointed to teach, but he must by this exercise, continued for so many years, have acquired greater maturity of judgment, stronger power of reasoning, and acuter penetration into character, and shrewder knowledge of men. For the scholastic system, as it is called, of instruction brings out the character of the individual pupil, as it keeps constantly well whetted, by discussion, the professor's genius.

Hence, a person living for years in constant intercourse with many who often saw the Pope, and knew him familiarly, used to say that while he was revered and loved by all that approached him, Pius VII. was respected no less for his assiduity and ability in public affairs. Indeed, during the latter years of his pontificate, to which these recollections belong, many questions relating to Great Britain and her colonies had to be discussed. Step by step the Holy Father himself was referred to, and took a personal interest in them, and indeed entered fully into them; so that the respectable English ecclesiastic alluded to, who frequently himself saw the Pope on such subjects, has left many records behind him of the judicious and definite views which he took of them, though necessarily new, and even strange, to Rome.

## CHAPTER IV.

## CONTINUATION.

THE simplicity of habits which proved so valuable in sustaining the amiable Pontiff, through the more painful vicissitudes of his reign, never left him upon the throne. Early hours, a frugal table, a solitary life, monotony almost of pursuits, by the regular round of official audiences, fixed for each day, and almost each hour, unrelieved by court festivities, or public recreation,—such is the life, more or less, of every successive Pope. He is not exempt from any of the obligations of his priesthood. He celebrates mass each morning, and assists at a second celebration. He recites the Breviary, like any of his poorest curates; his beads too, most certainly, like any simple catholic at home or abroad; besides, probably, other special devotions. He listens to sermons, not merely formal ones in his chapel, but to real honest preachings, strong and bold, by a Capuchin friar during Advent and

Lent. All this is every-day work; to which must be added the more public functions in which he takes a prominent, and often a laborious, part. To say that Pius VII. lived this life, would be simply the same as to say that he was Pope. Nor would it be an addition, after all that has been stated, to mention that he was kind, considerate, and affable to all around him. But there is one trait in his character, which must not be omitted, because it shows the strength of principles acting in opposition to what might have been considered his nature. He set the noble example of "not condescending to flesh and blood." However affectionate his heart might be, it did not lead him to bestow dignity or favour upon his own family. His predecessor, and relation, had unfortunately left a contrary example,—a weakness in a life of strong-minded virtue, a blemish in a pontificate of sorrowful glory. But the seventh Pius, who had renounced family ties, with family comforts, when he entered his noviceship, returned no more to the bonds which he had cast aside. He was, in this, irreproachable; and his conduct has been an example and law to his successors.

This, of course, helped to make the isolation of the Pope more complete. Pius VII., how-

ever, was in the habit of admitting occasionally into his society, in the evening, a few persons whose conversation he relished. Among these was Canova, the renovator of sculpture, its greatest modern master, and at the same time a noble and virtuous man. Another, who has been mentioned, was his secretary of Latin letters, Monsignor Testa. This excellent man united in himself many rare qualities. He was an elegant classical scholar, and composed his Latin letters as few else could do; he was acquainted with modern languages, which he made use of chiefly for the study of geology, and other natural sciences, in which he took great delight. This led to a particular friendship between him and the English College. He was to be found every afternoon taking his walk on Monte Pincio, generally in company with two or three friends, of whom the illustrious Mai was one. There one could join him, and learn the political and ecclesiastical chit-chat of the day. Sometimes a long-bearded Armenian or Syrian, or an American or Chinese missionary, would be in the group, and contribute interesting intelligence from the extremities of the earth. The venerable prelate, who formed the unfailing centre of the society, bore a winning smile ever on his aged countenance, with just the smallest

twinkling of drollery<sup>1</sup>, and that sense of the ludicrous which is inseparable from genius, and served to make him suggest questions calculated to bring out any little eccentricity or outlandishness in a narrator. Yet, simple as a child and as warm in his affections, never did an unkind word escape him; nor would he ever take advantage of the canonical exemption which his situation gave him from choral attendance twice a day at Santa Maria Maggiore, of which he was a prebendary.

An anecdote of his early life, related by himself, is interesting, because it refers also to a much more celebrated character. In his youth Testa was attached to the nunciature at Paris, and gained the esteem of many scientific men. Among them was Buffon, who one day asked

<sup>1</sup> He was one of those priests who refused to take the clergy oath exacted by the French government, and who were transported to Corsica, and there severely imprisoned. The good people of the neighbourhood used to approach the wall of the fortress where least guarded, and at a favourable moment a basket used to be let down from a barred window, and filled with such comforts as had been provided. Then Monsignor Testa would give the signal from his loop-hole, by the ambiguous phrase, well known to all the captives, of "Sursum corda," and the cord was quickly drawn up. When such learned theologians and canonists as Bolgeni and Devoti went astray on the subject of this oath, it required some firmness to refuse it with the alternative, most trying to a Roman of all persons, of being deported far from home. One poor old priest, when told, on refusing the oath, that he should be sent to the island of Corsica, said he had only one request to make—that he might go by land, as the sea would disagree with him.

him to dinner. On entering the drawingroom, he found himself unexpectedly in a company composed of the most eminent naturalists and mathematicians of Paris. He was somewhat overawed, though flattered by this attention, when a thought struck him which paralysed his joy and his appetite. It was Friday, a day of abstinence, not much observed by gentlemen of that class, though his attention or neglect would be narrowly observed. What should he do? How should he manage to play and dabble with forbidden meats, so as to arrive at the end of the meal, hungry but unobserved, and, what was more, unsullied? The doors of the dining-room were at length thrown open, but so unhappy was he at his own perplexing situation, that he did not notice the table, till startled by his host's address to his guests: "Messieurs, aujourd'hui est Vendredi, et il faut l'observer." He then saw that, evidently in compliment to him, the gentlemen naturalists had to confine their observations that day exclusively to aquatic animals, from whatever other animal reign the cook might have taken his condiments.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A more unpleasant experience of the same embarrassment befell the senator Rezzonico, nephew of Pope Clement XIII. He was on a visit of compliment to Frederick of Prussia, and was invited to dinner on a fast-day, and nothing was provided that he could eat.

In addition to the recreation thus obtained, the Pope invariably took his walk out of the Porta Pia, which was frequented by many who desired thus to obtain his blessing. This was given with the same bland smile to poor as to rich, to the peasant who happened to be driving his donkey loaded with sticks, as to the nobleman who descended from his carriage to kneel on the kerb-stone. Many a time have the writer and his companions chosen that direction for a walk, and been accosted by a passing salutation full of kindness.

Those, however, who wished really to see this Pontiff in his happiest aspect, would follow him to the churches which he might chance to visit ; or attend his ecclesiastical functions. His great age, and an accident which he had met with a short time before, prevented him, at the period to which these reminiscences refer, from performing himself any of the greater offices of the Church. His attendance was all that he could give, and that mostly in the palace chapel. Besides, at that time he lived exclusively at the Quirinal

The king watched, and pressed him with dish after dish, till the senator, seeing his royal host apparently distressed, informed him of the cause of his refusal. The king ordered anything at hand to be got ready, when presently a royal repast of meagre fare was brought in. His fidelity to conscience had been purposely put to the test.



palace, or Monte Cavallo; so that the solemn and almost sublime Sixtine chapel, with its royal hall and subsidiary Pauline chapel, were little seen, except as other places are, by lovers of art. The Vatican palace was, indeed, rather a collection of museums than a papal residence, till the next pontificate. In the over-light and freshly decorated chapel of Monte Cavallo, therefore, were most of the great offices of the Church, excepting those of Easter-tide and SS. Peter and Paul's feast, performed, shorn indeed of their great splendour, as now witnessed by every tourist. For even on these greater occasions, and when in the Vatican basilica, the Pope simply attended. But that presence gave to all its colour and solemnity. That spirit of piety which his saintly mother had engrafted on a sweet and gentle nature, was impressed upon his countenance and on his figure. Bent down by age and suffering, his attitude seemed that of continued prayer; sitting or standing, as much as kneeling, he struck your eye as the very picture of earnest and unaffected devotion, abstracted from the ceremonial, the state, or the multitude that surrounded him. It was in one great function, particularly, that this effect was most striking.

On the feast of Corpus Christi the great pro-

cession of the day is made round the whole square of St. Peter's ; the colonnade of which is continued round along the furthest houses, by means of a temporary portico. The beginning of the procession is entering the church of St. Peter, as its last portion is leaving the Sixtine chapel. It is a spectacle growing at every step in interest. Between the seven-deep lines of spectators, no longer northerns, but country people mostly, many of whom appear in the almost oriental costumes of their villages, rich in velvet, embroidery, and bullion, pass in succession the religious corporations, as they are called, of the city ; next, the chapters of the many collegiate churches, and those of the basilicas, preceded by their peculiar canopy-shaped banners, and their most ancient and precious crosses, dating even from Constantine. Then comes that noblest hierarchy that surrounds the first See in the world, partaking, necessarily, of the double function and character of its possessor,—prelates of various degrees, holding the great offices of state and of the household, judges, administrators, and councillors. These are followed by bishops of every portion of the Church, arrayed in the episcopal robes of their various countries, Latins, Greeks, Melchites, Maronites, Armenians, and Copts. To them again succeeds the Sacred College, divided,

like a chapter, into deacons and priests, but with the addition of the still higher order of bishops. And at the time of which we write there were men distinguished by the important parts which they had occupied in public affairs, and their share in suffering, and their example of virtuous constancy. Few of those whose names occur in Cardinal Pacca's memoirs, and in other records of the time, were, as yet, wanting to surround the good Pope with the associations of his previous history. Many of them, including the eminent historian himself, were, in appearance, most venerable, bearing a heavy weight of years on their spare erect forms, their heads mingling their thin white locks with their unblemished ermine, in rivalry of its whiteness, walking with the gait of princes, and speaking with the grace of virtuous wisdom ; and when seated in order, during a sacred function, looking so calmly dignified, so placid and noble, that many must have entertained the same thought on beholding them which crossed the writer's fancy. It was, that if an artist wished to represent the Roman senators silently seated in their house, when the soldiers of Brennus entered, paused, knelt, and worshipped, he would with difficulty have found anywhere else the fittest models for his picture. But here he would have possessed all : heads,

attitude, expression, feeling, in the very national type of the same people; and, moreover, the same order, position, and unimpassioned repose, with such flowing robes and richness of colour, as could guide the imagination to the older scene.

Such were the venerable princes whose names the stranger asked in a whisper as they passed in that procession before him, and who immediately preceded the finishing group of its moving picture. Its base was formed by almost a multitude of attendants, such as, had they been the object at which one could look, would have carried one back three centuries at least. The bright steel armour of the Swiss guards, upon party-coloured doublet and hose, the officers' suits being richly damascened in gold, gleamed amid the red damask tunics of bearers, walking symmetrically and unflinchingly under a heavy burden; while the many two-handed swords of the Swiss flamed upwards, parallel with the lofty poles of a rich silver-tissue and embroidered canopy that towered above all, and was carried by persons who deemed it a high honour, and who wore also the quaint costume of days gone by.

But high in air, beneath the canopy, and upon the estrade or small platform borne aloft, is the

crowning object of the entire procession. Upon a faldstool richly covered stands the golden Monstrance, as it was anciently called in England, that contains the holiest object of Catholic belief and worship; and behind it the Pontiff kneels, with his ample embroidered mantle embracing the faldstool before him. Thus he is borne along, so that all may see and join him in his devotion, wherein he is undisturbed by even the motion required to walk in a procession. No one who ever saw Pope Pius VII. in this position will easily forget the picture. • The hands firmly and immovably clasped at the base of the sacred vessel; the head bent down, not in feebleness but in homage; the closed eyes that saw none of the state and magnificence around, but shut out the world from the calm and silent meditation within; the noble features so composed that no expression of human feeling or an earthly thought could be traced upon, or gathered from, them; the bare head, scarcely ever uncovered except then<sup>1</sup>, with locks still dark floating unheeded in the breeze; these characteristic forms and appearances of a human frame, unmoving and unwavering as a sculptured figure, might have been taken as the purest and sublimest

<sup>1</sup> The white skull-cap worn by the Pope is called the Solideo, because only taken off in homage to God.

symbol of entranced adoration. The swelling chorus of the hymns and psalms before him evidently did not reach his ear; the smoke of fragrant incense just under him did not soothe his nostrils; the waves of a multitude, swayed to and fro with the murmur of a sea, traced not its image on his eyeballs: he was himself abstracted from all that sense could convey, and was centred in one thought, in one act of mind, soul, and heart, in one duty of his sublime office, one privilege of his supreme commission. He felt, and was, and you knew him to be, what Moses was on the mountain, face to face, for all the people, with God; the vicar, with *his* Supreme Pontiff; the chief shepherd, with the Prince of pastors; the highest and first of living men, with the One living God.<sup>1</sup>

I record impressions,—impressions never to be effaced. It may be that youth, by its warmth, softens more the mould in which they are made, so that they sink deeper, and are produced at

<sup>1</sup> On Good Friday, 1818, an English traveller was watching, with great feeling, the Pope, as, bare-headed and unsandaled, he advanced up the chapel to kiss the cross. Some one whispered to him that this was a piece of superstition. "Oh, say not so," he exclaimed; "it is affecting and sublime." This was Mr. Mathias, one of the three whom, as Forsyth remarks, in virtue of alliteration, the Italians allow to have written Italian verse like natives: Milton and Menage being the other two.

the same time more sharply and definitely : but certainly those earlier pictures remain in the memory as the standard types of what has been many times again seen. When we have gazed upon many repetitions of a painting by a great master, we can hardly divest ourselves of the idea that the first we saw must have been the original, the others duplicates.

If thus far the reader has followed what he may consider unalloyed praise, he may have a right to ask, where are the shadows that must give relief to the lights in our portrait ? Cardinal Pacca, his minister, and companion in his most trying situation, has openly declared what was the flaw, or imperfection, that struck him, through all his connection with the Holy Pontiff, and it is the one most usually allied with gentleness and meekness. Irresolution, when left to himself, strongly contrasted with courage when he saw his duty clearly, under advice. Some attributed this failing to the low estimate which the Holy Father had formed of his own abilities, to an habitual humility of thought. No doubt, in his unselfish and simple heart, a failing like this, that easily leans towards virtue's side, naturally took this form ; and a poor estimation of his own gifts would both clothe and strengthen a true feebleness that existed. But the fault, if

natural, was not one to be cured by the same training as matured his other good qualities. There is not, indeed, a happier life for the weak in spirit than that of a community. It most truly relieves the mind of daily and worrying cares, and leaves it serene for occupations that soften and soothe it; but it blunts the edge of self-reliance, so as to be less able to cut a knot or chop down an obstacle: for it renders counsel easy and accessible, and, in fact, makes it indispensable; for where many live together in peaceful community of interests, there is not much that requires solitary action. This would be simply obstructive, or disturbing.

- The government of the Pope was vigorous and decided, because he knew better than most princes how to choose his minister, and, once chosen, how to give him his confidence. If this work were a history, it would be easy to give proof of this truly sovereign instinct. It may be sufficient to say, that no one could have served him more wisely, at the critical moment when his misfortunes commenced, than their historian, Cardinal Pacca; none could have guided the helm of his shattered vessel more skilfully or more firmly than the great statesman, Consalvi. It was in that middle space between these two ministers, —when no longer, indeed, a monarch, but a cap-



tive ; when bereft of all advice and sympathy, but pressed on close by those who, themselves probably deceived, thoroughly deceived him,—that he committed the one error of his life and pontificate, in 1813. For there came to him men “of the seed of Aaron,” who could not be expected to mislead him, themselves free and moving in the busiest of the world, who showed him, through the loopholes of his prison, that world from which he was shut out, as though agitated on its surface, and to its lowest depths, through his unbendingness ; the Church torn to schism, and religion weakened to destruction, from what they termed his obstinacy. He who had but prayed and bent his neck to suffering, was made to appear in his own eyes a harsh and cruel master, who would rather see all perish, than loose his grasp on unrelenting, but impotent, jurisdiction.<sup>1</sup>

He yielded for a moment of conscientious alarm, he consented, though conditionally, under false, but virtuous, impressions, to the terms proposed to him for a new Concordat. But no sooner had his upright and humble mind discovered the error, than it nobly and successfully repaired it. He would have no help

<sup>1</sup> The deputation of bishops and others, who visited him at Savona.

from others in this work, he would let no man risk peace or comfort by assisting him. He would be his own secretary ; wrote, corrected, and transcribed the necessary documents ; recovered his bright serenity, his sweet smile, and unruffled peace by his humble candour ; and rose higher in the esteem and love of all who knew him, from the depth of the self-abasement into which he nobly descended.

The history of this transaction has long been before the public under two very different aspects ; as related with passionless simplicity by Cardinal Pacca, or as dramatically and caustically narrated by the Abbé de Pradt. The one bears all the marks of a sincere recorder of facts ; the other the stamp of a bitter, though witty and clever partisan. But it is difficult to look back upon the momentous crisis to which we have alluded in the fortunes of the Pope, and, according to merely human calculation, in those of the Church, without a moment's reflection on what forms its highest view.

When historical events, through our progress, have receded sufficiently from our sight, for us no longer to discern their lesser details, and the feelings which they excited, they pass into the domain of providential records. The actors in them stand in a more solemn light ; their

relative proportions change, perhaps their places; their influence on the world can be measured by results. This is the case even in daily life. The man who first pressed the lever of the printing-press wielded a more powerful and noble sceptre, than the sovereign who may have dropped a few coins in his hand as a brave mechanic. Lunardi, who swelled and puffed himself out as much as his balloon, and was admired and honoured by great ones, has passed out of sight, borne away on the very wings of unsubstantial uselessness; while a man who was silently watching, at home, the vapour from the cauldron, was distilling from it, in the alembic of his brain, a subtler spirit still; for it was to become the very spirit of a coming world.

But when we look back at public men and things placed in the very midst of eventful currents, flowing on, but modified, directed, controlled irresistibly by them, they are not accidents in their places, but causes, now seen and felt to be such, of what moves round them, themselves subservient to a higher cause. They may allow the stream to flow quietly on one side, and force it to writhe and twist itself on the other; they may be dashed over by a gathering torrent in what before was but a freshet, nay they may be toppled over, borne

down, carried away, and clean dissolved ; but to the last they will have been the necessary quantities by which every ordinary law of motion, of pressure, of relative existence has to be modified or estimated. In history the world runs smooth enough for a time ; but the appearance, suddenly, in the midst of its stream, of an Alexander, or a Charlemagne, or a Christopher Columbus, destroys the equilibrium of existing forces, by arms, by wisdom, or by a sublimer gift, and prepares a new phase of society, the full value, or importance at least, of which may not be estimable for many generations to come. With all their vices, blunders, crimes, follies, grandeur, and littlenesses, we see in them instruments of an unusual, stark and strong, providential interposition, beneficent in the end, though sometimes awfully judicial in the beginning.

Into the list of such historical names, short as it is, and severely exclusive, it is impossible not to insert that of Napoleon I. Never was symbol better chosen by a monarch than the eagle was by him. Eagle in his eye, eagle in his soar, eagle in his strength of wing when balanced above his aim, and in swiftness when darting on it, eagle in his gripe ; yet eagle in all that distinguishes the king of birds from vulture, hawk, or gentle falcon. A warrior by nature, and a conqueror

by instinct, with all the roughness of the one, and all the haughtiness of the other, yet fitting a throne as if he had been nursed upon it, surrounding it with the splendour of feudal monarchies, and filling it with the grace of ancient kings, he seemed to have learnt intuitively, in the stern occupations of war, the tastes, the tact, the amenities, and what was still more, the duties and exigencies, of an imperial royalty. Art and science, almost shamed and even scared by cruel examples from society, raised their heads, and threw their grateful homage at the feet of their reviver; an Augustan age of literature broke forth from the chaos of revolutionary barbarism, and its brilliant authors hung their thanks, in verse and prose, upon his armour or his ermine; manufactures sprung up with a taste and profusion which not only shed a new lustre round his halls from Sèvres and the Gobelins, but made France more than ever the arbiter of elegancies, and dictatress of fashion. To this must be added the wonderful and inborn mastership in the craft of government, which he at once displayed; — his power of domestic organisation and internal rule, whereby he held in his own hands the threads of command, from every department, prefectship, and mayoralty, almost as completely, if not as

instantaneously acting, as the telegraph wires in the cabinet of his present illustrious successor. And further, add the mental clearness and practical thinking-power required to enable a man to be a lawgiver, and to draw up a code of universal justice, civil and criminal, theoretical and applied, — classifications of offences, procedure, adjustment of punishment, prevention, pursuit, and correction. Such a code, too, as could and did suit a people whose cumbersome legislation, “ordonnances,” octrois, decrees of extinct parliaments, had been swept away by a ruthless revolution; a people which had acquired new thoughts, new feelings, new claims; though not new traditions and usages, to lend either a base or buttress to a legal system. To have given a body of useful laws had obtained for Solon and Alonzo the epithet of the Wise, for Charlemagne that of the Great, for our Edward that of the Good. And much counsel from practical and from studious men, no doubt had each one of these singular rulers; there was much to be compiled, much to be compared, much to be adjusted to its resting-point by the balance of dissenting or diverging views. But we have seen how little commissions for codifying can do, where any amount and extent of professional ability and experience are collected, without the direction

and supervision of a master-mind which brings higher controlling elements into the combination, superior to technicalities, "wise saws, and modern instances." And therefore the simple title of "Code Napoléon," while it denies no praise to the learned and industrious men who arranged and composed it, tells the future as the present age, who watched over the great work to maturity, presided personally over the deliberations of its compilers, ruled their differences, threw in the valuable ingredient of a strong unbiassed sense; and, if he sometimes embroiled, oftener conciliated, jarring sentiments. Nor is it slender praise of this undertaking accomplished amidst innumerable other cares, that it should have remained established in countries from which every other vestige of French dominion has vanished, — preserved as of great value by dynasties of rival houses, through the first impulse of sudden restorations to abolish every novelty, and of the experience of time to produce something more national.

"Quot libras in duce summo!" we may well exclaim; and ask, was such a man sent on the public stage without a part allotted to him of supreme importance and inevitable influence? But now another evidence of a providential destiny has come, after many years, before us,

— one which baffles many a previous calculation. He dashed over the world like a meteor ; blazed, dazzled, and dropped completely extinct. He was a phenomenon, a comet if you please, that struck its course athwart the quiet planes of regular orbs, whose mutual attractions and counter-attractions had been part of their periodical laws of motion ; and swung them, more rudely than usual, from their steady course. But the disturbing brush was over ; the eccentric body had flown by, never to return. “ Write this man childless,” had become truth, plainly recorded in the world’s history. And that history had scarcely begun to acknowledge and extol what was really great in him, or recognise his indispensable place in the world : for whose interest was it to do so ?

That yet, after all this, almost a generation later, the ostracised, branded, and proscribed name should be found in the same place, bearing after it the same imperial title, — annulled, abolished by a congress of Europe, — with every human probability, and many earnest desires, that both may be continued in a lasting dynasty, — is surely strange and unexpected enough to establish a providential dispensation in the history of the first Emperor. It suggests the idea, that whatever he did or intended, that



partook of his nobler and higher nature, his genius, his grandeur of mind, and his faith, is to be preserved and even developed, as a legacy of family love alone can be ; while the errors and the excesses that have clouded it will ever serve as traditional lessons, where they can be most accurately appreciated for avoidance.

All this may, no doubt, appear superfluous ; for no one who recognises what we may call providential crises in history, will refuse to acknowledge one in the appearance of Napoleon Bonaparte, rising suddenly and straight, like a solid sea-wall, from the revolutionary abyss, and protecting against that from which it springs — the shaken and shattered earth. And yet the reader must indulge this vein still further, before the writer's view can be made clear.

Europe has experienced many political revolutions, but it has witnessed only one social one. It has only been by invasion and conquest, that an entire and ancient royal dynasty has been swept away ; every order of rank and nobility abolished ; the whole class of the priesthood, and the national religion, with all its institutions, monuments, rites, and usages, annulled by death, confiscation, destruction, or abrogation ; the map of the country pulled to pieces, its provinces remodelled under other names ; its weights and

measures, from the ton to the grain, and from the league to the inch, changed in name and proportion ; its divisions of time, from the era of its date to the distribution of the year, of its months, and of their subdivisions ; and finally the total system of government, finance, justice, and municipal administration, effaced and produced anew. When the Turks seized on the Byzantine empire they effected exactly such a revolution ; and such the Saracens made in Andalusia and Granada. For even they did not change that stubborn element of nationality—language. The Albanian and the Moldavian, the Arab and the Greek, the scattered tribes of the mountains or the sands, retained their mother-tongues.

What is called the French revolution did therefore, for perhaps the only time in the world's history, what only the complete subjugation of a country by a foreign enemy has ever done. It was a volcano, not so much in the violent and burning outburst of hidden fires, frightfully energetic and appalling, as by its covering with the scorixæ and ashes that had nourished them the rich soil and teeming produce of civilisation. These will indeed reappear ; the surface, new and unnatural, will be abraded by time and storms and gradually the germs, crushed, but not killed,

of old life, will struggle through, and be green again above the black field.

The terrible upheaving of the subsoils over the surface, consist they of mobs or clubs, mountains or conventions; the triumph of proletarianism over the noble and the sacred, the aristocracy of genius as of birth; the execrable impartiality of wickedness, which could send a Bailly or a Lavoisier to the scaffold as willingly as a Danton or a Robespierre; the persevering struggle to destroy whatever was enlightened by education, study, and familiarity with polished literature and elegant society, seemed to lead almost to the very extinction, not only of civilisation, but of whatever could again revive it. For there arose, too, from that very slime of corruption and brutality<sup>1</sup>, a crop of ferocious genius

<sup>1</sup> A few years ago, after the barricades, a number of *prolétaires*, left destitute in Paris, whither they had come to find work or plunder, were kindly provided with food and lodging in a college; where also pains were taken to give them some moral instruction. All seemed becomingly accepted, when the superior, hoping to soften still more their minds and hearts, showed to some of them the stains of blood which still marked the floor, from the massacres of the great revolution. One of the men, after listening to his account, exclaimed: "Ah, Monsieur! vous ne nous connaissez pas. Nous ferions autant. *Nous sommes de la boue nous autres.* Nous accepterions votre pain avec une main, et nous vous poignarderions avec l'autre." Has the reader ever met a crowd coming away from an execution? Has he ever seen another like it? Where did it come from? Similar questions used to be asked at Paris in the days of terror, and used to be answered with almost a superstitious shudder.

and prowess, which threatened not only to render the new order of things permanent, but to endow it with power of propagation and extension. It is hard to say whether this giant power was the nation's will or the nation's arm ; whether it gave, or followed, an impulse ; whether successive leaders, — as they rose to the surface of that turbid pool, controlled its billows for a while, and then were tossed to be impaled upon its rocks, — forced their way up by innate might, or were pushed and whirled by the turbulence below into upper air. But, one after the other, they showed no higher or nobler thoughts and aims, than the basest and most sanguinary of those who had upheaved them ; no more instinct for morality, order, or civilisation, no more reverence for genius or virtue, no more desire to turn the flow of social energies into their usual channels, and regain the calm breath and steady pulse that alone are evidence of national vitality. For this they mistook the tremendous outbreaks of rude strength, and the choking throbs of a maniacal access.

Count De Maistre, with truthful humour, describes the human animal as composed of three elements, soul, body, and — *bête*.<sup>1</sup> When the

<sup>1</sup> *Voyage autour de ma Chambre.*

bestial element gets the uppermost, it must be for a wild start and headlong career of some sort; and here it was for a mad political debauch. The people, as it was called, had plunged, and reared, struggled, and wrenched itself loose from whatever it considered a load to which it had been unjustly yoked; whether the wain of laborious industry, or a golden car of royal state. In doing this, it had torn every tie which connected it with social order. It had broken "the triple cord" of the domestic charities; for often the greatest enemies of a man were those of his own house. It had snapped the golden chain of mutual interest which unites different classes, till, after reckless plunder and systematic confiscation, *assignats* had become the wretched substitute for coin. In fine, it had even rent the tougher thongs, by which justice both binds and scourges delinquent members of society; for revolutionary tribunals had taken the place of the calm judgment-seat, or rather it was a more terrible procedure, by mob accusation, trial, sentence, and execution.

One band only remained unbroken, flung loose upon the neck, in this wild career, and he who should have courage enough to seize it, and cool prudence to handle it, so as to wheel round almost unconsciously, and bring back to the

beaten track of nations, this yet uncontrollable energy, would, indeed, be the man of his age, and the retriever of his country. This rein which no Phaethon could have seized without being dashed, as so many had been, to pieces, was the intense love of country, a love like all else near it, passionate, fierce, and scorching ; that burnt for vengeance on every foe, scorned the opposition of the entire world, was darkly jealous of every glory gained for it by every king, though it turned itself into hatred at the very name. There can only be one man at a time equal to such an emergency ; and looking back after fifty or sixty years, no one can doubt that a higher will than man's, a better cause than fate, gave him his destiny.

He snatched, in the right moment, this only rein which could guide back his country to the beaten way ; seconding its last noble impulse, he gained his mastery over it, soothed it, caressed it ; then called into action once more the dormant instincts of classified society, subordination, moral responsibility, and at last religion. The opportune appearance of such a man, gifted with such a combination of necessary qualifications, as indispensable then, as at all times rare, becomes, so contemplated, a providential act.

This consideration does not oblige nor lead us

steel armour of the warrior brushed against the soft texture of the sacerdotal vestment. In either case, which was sure to give way ?

We come then to the great moral of this historical, or rather providential moment. To the catholic mind the reading is simple. It required a man of marvellous genius, of irresistible power, of unfailing success, of singular quickness in measuring opposition, in reading character, in seizing the key to the present position, the passes to the future, a daring master of destiny, a soldier, a chieftain, a lawgiver, an emperor in mind and presentiment ; it needed all this, and more, to form the man who should subdue the most tremendous of social convulsions, and give a designation to his era in history.

Well, and no wonder he deemed himself invincible. And while he stood on his own ground, sat on his war-steed, or on his throne, he was so.

But there needed only a plain and simple monk, brought up in a cloister, ignorant of the world, single-minded in his aims, guileless and artless in his word and speech, not eloquent, nor brilliant in qualities or attainments, meek, gentle, sweet, humble-minded, and devout ; it required only a Pope of average character in the qualifications of his state, to prove that there was a power superior to that of a mighty conqueror

and give to the age a rival, though unbelted, hero.

And no wonder if the captor was made captive<sup>1</sup>, and the conqueror was subdued. For he had left his own ground, he had dismounted from his charger, he had descended from his throne:— he had stepped into the sanctuary. And there the old man of mild aspect and gentle voice was in his own. And the whole could only be a repetition of a scene often repeated there; and its result was only the execution of an eternal law.

<sup>1</sup> We must naturally reject every unauthenticated story of rudeness personally shown to the holy Pontiff. A celebrated interview of Fontainebleau has been made the subject of a picture by an eminent artist (Wilkie); and dramatic accounts have been given of what there passed. The Italian biographer of Pius VII., who published his work two years after the Pope's death in Rome itself, then full of intimate friends, admirers, and companions of his misfortunes, who had heard his own narrative of his sufferings, gives a very different account of the conclusion of this interview from that generally reported; and he is by no means disposed to partiality in favour of the Emperor. After giving a description of a conversation, animated on both sides, and carried on in so loud a tone as to resound through the neighbouring rooms, he relates in full the Pope's calm summary of all that he had done and suffered for the preservation of the Church and of religion. It ended by a firm, but mild, expression of his determination to undergo anything rather than consent to what was demanded. He continues:—"Napoleon, who had listened attentively, was moved by this firmness of purpose, joined to such an apostolic simplicity. He was calmed, *embraced the Pope*, and, on leaving, said, 'Had I been in your place, I would have done the same.'" (*Pistoletti*, vol. iii p. 142.) Was not this taking the captor captive, and subduing in the noblest sense? And what more honourable homage could have been paid to the conduct of the Pope?



The Emperor Arcadius, more perhaps through evil counsel than through malice, had the great Bishop St. John Chrysostom removed from his patriarchal see, and carried away into the fastnesses of cold inclement mountains. Years after his death, Theodosius and Pulcheria made reparation in the same city, publicly and fearlessly, for the injury inflicted by their parents on so holy a man.

And has there been virtually no repetition of this same noble and generous scene ? Upon how many a French soldier and officer has the splendid statue of Pius in the Vatican seemed to look down, smilingly and forgivingly, and with hand outstretched to shed a blessing, at once sacerdotal and paternal ?

## CHAPTER V.

## CONDITION AND FEELINGS OF ROME.

AT the period to which the foregoing chapters relate, it was not difficult to learn the feelings with which every class in Rome looked back at the times through which the country had lately passed, and those with which the people contemplated their actual condition.

The Romans, whatever changes may have occurred in their character, have always retained, as an inalienable part of their inheritance, a sensitive consciousness that their city can hold no secondary rank. In every vicissitude of fortune this has been the law of her existence. The translation of the empire to Constantinople, or of the kingdom of Italy to Ravenna, or of the papal court to Avignon, might have appeared sufficient to strip her of her rank; while the successive spoliations, sackings, burnings, and demolitions, inflicted by barbarians or factions, would have accounted for her sinking to the position of Veii or Collatium. But the destiny

of Rome had risen above every catastrophe, superior to all accidents, and all designs hostile to her supremacy. Now, however, for the first time, Rome had been but a provincial city, subject to a foreign dominion, governed by a military chief, with a new municipal and judicial system, and a total change in social relations. Even the computation of time was altered. The peace-nurtured children of the soil were subjected to military conscription, which rent them from their families, and sent them far away to the frozen regions of Russia, or the torrid shores of Andalusia, to bleed and die for strangers.

From many causes, the population of Rome had dwindled year by year of the occupation, till from 153,000, it had been reduced to 117,000<sup>1</sup>; many of the best families had left, some indeed to occupy posts of trust in other portions of the Empire, others to escape the responsibilities and honours of a government towards which they felt no attraction. Money had become scarce, the abundant sources of public and private charity had been dried up; assignats had first been freely circulated, and then suddenly made valueless;

<sup>1</sup> The first was the population in 1800; the second, in 1813. This was the minimum. There was a steady increase till 1837, when the cholera augmented the deaths from 3000 to 12,000. Between 1848 and 1849, the population diminished by 13,000. On the present Pope's return it again increased, and last year it had reached 178,798.

and many honest families had been driven to want.<sup>1</sup>

The sweeping away of the Court, with its many dependencies, the breaking up of the households of perhaps fifty cardinals, of many prelates, and ambassadors, had thrown thousands out of direct employment, and tens of thousands of workmen, artists, and artisans, to whom such establishments gave occupation. At the same time were necessarily closed the various offices for the administration of ecclesiastical affairs, local and general, which give bread to more laymen than clerks.

Another, and a sensitive sore in the minds of the Romans had been the loss of so many objects, which elsewhere might be things of luxury, but in Rome were almost necessities of life. The most precious manuscripts of the Vatican, with which they were by their very names associated (*Codex Vaticanus* was a title of honour), the invaluable collection of medals, every statue and group of fame, the master-pieces of painting in all the churches, the archives of the Vatican and of other departments of ecclesiastical government,

<sup>1</sup> A gentleman of great credit informed me that, going out one morning early, he saw standing, among many others, a nobleman awaiting the opening of a baker's shop, that he might buy the bread which had to be the sustenance of his family for the day. He had no servant to send; and he entreated my informant not to tell any one of his having seen him in so painful a situation.

and many other, to Rome invaluable, treasures had been removed. The noble halls of the Vatican and Capitol had been empty and deserted: for, plaster casts, and a few artists obliged to be content with them, could ill replace the original marbles, and the crowds that used to flock to admire them. Private galleries had shared a similar fate. The Borghese collection of statues had been sold to the Emperor; and the Albani museum had been in part removed, but fortunately in part was only packed up for the journey, and thus was to a great extent saved.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The collection of antiquities in the Borghese villa, 255 in number, including the monuments of Gabii, were bought in 1808 by the Emperor, and paid for according to contract. The sale may be considered a forced one; though, in truth, fear of an English invasion was the only real constraint. For the Emperor had negotiated in vain with his brother-in-law, the Prince, up to that period. The sale was made under protest from the Government, as it was contrary to law. In 1814, the family claimed back its antiquities; but Louis XVIII. refused to part with them, as lawfully purchased.

The case of the Albani collection was more severe. In 1798 the French Directory confiscated the whole Albani property, as well as that of the Braschi family. The magnificent Albani villa, near Rome, was stripped of its sculptures and marbles, and they, with the books and paintings of the house, were sent to Paris. Only a few cases that were lying sealed in the Roman custom-house in 1802, were then restored. In 1814, the Cardinal Joseph Albani, backed by the Austrian and Roman governments, demanded restitution of the family property. Although allied to the House of Austria by blood, the family had been suffering distress from the confiscation. On the 9th of October, 1815, the celebrated relief of Antinous was restored to Sig. Santi, the Cardinal's commissioner; and in December following, the remaining pieces of

If Rome had deplored, and most justly, the loss of her arts, her greatest secular ornaments, what must have been her grief at the religious desolation into which she had been plunged? For to the letter almost it might have been said, that “her streets had mourned, because no one came any longer to her solemn festivals.” The crowds of strangers who yearly visit Rome will acknowledge, that it is not merely for the sake of her unrivalled monuments that they travel so far, but that the religious ceremonies, which they expect to witness, form no small portion of their attraction. Why also do all flock to Naples during the weeks that intervene between those celebrations, and abandon its early spring, its transparent sea and golden orange-groves, just at the moment when Rome is stripped of everything cheerful, its very bells are hushed, and its music consists of lamentations and *misereres*?

Rome is a city of churches, neither more nor less than a city of galleries and museums: for its churches enter into this class of wonders too.

sculpture of his museum, thirty-nine in number, were purchased for the Louvre by Louis XVIII. Among these are the beautiful statue of Euripides, another Antinous as Hercules, equally valuable, with several precious busts. Of the pictures and books, and of many other pieces of glyptic art, no account was ever had, so far as we have heard.

Architecture, painting, sculpture, rich marbles, metal-work, decoration, artistic effects of every sort, are to be found, separate or combined, in the churches. Many are grand in their outlines, though poor in detail, while others present no great features, yet are teeming with artistic treasure. Here is a fresco by Raffaele, there a chapel or a group by Michelangelo; in this is a dome by Lanfranco, in that spandrils by Domenichino; in one a mass of unique marble, a huge flight of steps of materials sold elsewhere by the ounce, in another a gorgeous altar of precious stones enshrining a silver statue. But I well remember old men who wept when you spoke of these things; as the sires of Israel did, who could contrast the new temple of Jerusalem with the vanished glories of the old. Everything was now poor, compared with what they had seen before the treaty of Tolentino, and the subsequent levies of church treasure, during foreign occupation.

However, even all this was but secondary to the greater loss of persons compared with things. Many of the churches of Rome are built for large bodies of clergy to serve them; and these had disappeared. Then came the still more irreparable loss of a sovereign-priest (like Melchisedec) officiating before and for his people; with

his ministers of state, his high princes and nobles surrounding and assisting him, bringing to the service of God what elsewhere is royal state. Such a ceremonial had its own proportioned seats, in the greater basilicas, never seen as they deserve to be, at other times. St. Peter's, else, is a grand aggregation of splendid churches, chapels, tombs, and works of art. It becomes then a whole, a single, peerless temple, such as the world never saw before. That central pile, with its canopy of bronze as lofty as the Farnese palace, with its deep-diving stairs leading to a court walled and paved with precious stones, that yet seems only a vestibule to some cavern of a catacomb, with its simple altar that disdains ornament in the presence of what is beyond the reach of human price—that, which in truth forms the heart of the great body, placed just where the heart should be,—is only on such occasions animated, and surrounded on every side, by living and moving sumptuousness. The immense cupola above it, ceases to be a dome over a sepulchre, and becomes a canopy above an altar; the quiet tomb beneath is changed into the shrine of relics below the place of sacrifice—the saints under the altar;—the quiet spot at which a few devout worshippers at most times may be found, bowing under the 100 lamps, is crowded by rising



groups, beginning from the lowest step, increasing in dignity and in richness of sacred robes, till, at the summit and in the centre, stands supreme the Pontiff himself, on the very spot which becomes him, the one living link in a chain, of which the very first ring is riveted to the shrine of the apostles below.

This position no one else can occupy, with any associations that give it its singular character. It is only his presence that puts everything there in its proper place, and combines all the parts into a significant unity. St. Peter's is only itself when the Pope is at its high altar; and hence only by, or for, him is it ever used.

All this of course had ceased to be: it was a plain impossibility to attempt any substitution for it. It might be said, that the highest form of religious celebration known in the Catholic Church, as indeed in the Christian world, had been abolished, or suspended without intention of its being ever resumed. It was impossible for a people, so proud of the spiritual preeminence of its ecclesiastical government, and of the grandeur with which this was exhibited on solemn occasions, not to feel all the mortification and abasement involved in this privation.

There can be no difficulty, therefore, in imagining that the restoration of the Pontifical

Government had been hailed, and continued, at the time of which we write, to be considered as a return to happiness and prosperity, as a passage from gloom and sullenness to brightest cheerfulness. And so, at that time, everybody spoke. No doubt the seeds of other thoughts had been left in the ground, by those who so long had held it. It will always happen that some profit more under an unlawful tenure, than under a legitimate master; and it had always been noticed, that in every measure of spoliation and violence, not only was the necessary information furnished, but the most disloyal part was taken, by natives and subjects. But these, and others like them, must be considered as, then at least, exceptions. The many who had experienced

. . . "Come sa di sale  
Il pane altrui, e come è duro calle  
Lo scendere e il salir per le altrui scale,"<sup>1</sup>

the nobles, that is, who, of blood scarcely less than royal and even imperial, had been obliged to pay court to strangers of much lower rank, and indeed to solicit their patronage; the merchant class who had suffered from general stagnation; and the peasantry, whose traditional loyalty had always been seasoned with religious reverence,

<sup>1</sup> Paradiso, xvii.

were here of one mind. With more general truth than when the words were first written, we may say, that, on Pius the Seventh's return, "Italy changed her mourning attire."<sup>1</sup> Not only the artist, but the homeliest citizen of Rome, rejoiced, as he saw the huge cases pass along the streets, which he was told contained the Laocoon, or the Apollo, the Transfiguration, or the Communion of St. Jerome. And even objects of minor interest to the many, the manuscripts of the Vatican, the archives of the Palace, of the public ministries, even of the Holy Office, were welcomed back with joy, as evidence of a return to what everyone considered the normal state.

And so when, upon his return to Rome, Pius VII. proceeded for the first time, after many years, to the balcony in the porch of the Vatican basilica, to pronounce once more his solemn benediction over the assembled crowds, not only of Rome, but of its neighbouring towns and surrounding territory, the commotion of all was, beyond description, tender. To many still young this was the first occasion of witnessing a scene never to be forgotten. As, within the church, all may be said to have been arranged and almost predestined for the function at the great ponti-

<sup>1</sup> "Ad ejus reditum lugubres vestes Italia mutavit." — *St. Jerome*.

fical altar, so, outside, one would almost suppose that everything was accessory to the papal benediction. At any rate, the great square basks, with unalluring magnificence, on any other day, in the midday sun. Its tall obelisk sends but a slim shadow to travel round the oval plane, like the gnomon of a huge dial ; its fountains murmur with a delicious dreaminess, sending up massive jets like blocks of crystal into the hot sunshine, and receiving back a broken spray on which sits serene an unbroken iris, but present no "cool grot" where one may enjoy their freshness ; and, in spite of the shorter path, the pilgrim looks with dismay at the dazzling pavement and long flight of unsheltered steps between him and the church, and prudently plunges into the forest of columns at either side of the piazza, and threads his way through their uniting shadows, intended, as an inscription tells him, for this express purpose<sup>1</sup> ; and so sacrifices the view of the great church towards which he has perhaps been wending his way for days, to the comfort of a cooler approach.

But on the days that the sovereign Pontiff bestows his blessing from the *loggia*, as it is

<sup>1</sup> The inscription is from Isai. iv. 6. "A tabernacle for a shade in the daytime from the heat, and for a security and covert from the whirlwind, and from the rain."

called, that is, from above the principal entrance to the portico of the church, no one thinks of the heat, or sultriness even, of the day, aggravated though it may be, by the additional caloric of many thousand panting bodies. Every thing seems arranged on purpose: and no other place on earth could answer half so well. The gigantic flights of steps leading to the church, with immense terraces between, are covered with such a carpet as no loom ever wove. Groups of peasantry from the neighbouring towns and villages cover it, some standing in eager expectation, many lying down at full stretch, waiting more calmly; chiefly women and children. The men are in their gayest attire, with blue or green velvet jackets, their hair gathered in a green silk net, with white stockings, and such silver buckles at the knee, and still more on the foot, that if such articles had been discovered in an ancient tomb, and supposed to give a rule of proportion for the primeval wearer, they would have given the lie to the old proverb: "*ex pede Herculem.*" But the female attire on those occasions was, far more than now since the invasion of Manchester has reached even Apennine villages, characteristically distinct. The peasants of Frascati and Albano, with immense gold earrings and necklaces, the

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silver skewer through the hair under the snow-white flat kerchief, with richly brocaded stomachers and showy silks, looked almost poor beside the Oriental splendour of the costume, supposed to be in truth Saracenic, of the dames from Nettuno. A veil of domestic texture of gold relieved by stripes of the richest colours, formed the crown of a dress truly elegant and magnificent. Gay colours also form the predominant feature of more inland districts, as of Sonnino and Sezze.

This multitude covers the steps and terraces, making them look like a living parterre, masses of bright colour waving to and fro, as in the breeze. Below on the level ground are ranges of equipages filled with more aristocratic visitors, and further still there is an open military square, in the middle of which a brilliant staff glitters in the sun. The embracing arms of the elliptical colonnade, expanding and reentering, seem to hold within their margin the vast assembly with ease, and the dark shadowy spaces between the pillars are relieved by the glimpse of golden state carriages, and the nodding heads of plumed horses, enjoying the cool retreat.

Such a rich, varied, and yet harmonious scene could only be produced by one person, by a single, and almost momentary act. For hours

the more patient and devout, who want nothing else, have been basking and melting in the sun ; and for some time the more eager have been rushing in every direction to reach the pre-appointed place of sight. The bell has been tolling a heavy monotonous boom ; its sudden hush is a signal for that indescribable, tide-like murmur, and inarticulate heave, which in a crowd implies silence. Every eye is turned to one point : in that instant every person and thing is where it was meant they all should be : no lens has a focus more true and certain, or more powerfully concentrating, for rays to converge to, than the space just large enough to contain one human countenance that is now filled up, in what just before was a blank over the central balcony. By whatever feeling the eye may be directed, by the simple faith of the Italian, the love of picturesqueness of the German, the curiosity of the unbeliever, or the cynicism of the Exeter Hall declaimer, each eye is inevitably turned to that one point, however reluctantly ; fifty thousand or more are concentrated upon one aged man's face ; and in the look of the good old man there is a holy fascination that keeps them spell-bound for the few moments that he is before them ; they can look at nothing else. And what is all this for ?

It is a vision of a moment. After long expectation, a few heads are just seen, but hardly recognisable, above the balustrade of the balcony, then the flabellæ or fans of state, and last lifted high, the mitred pontiff. A few words are spoken, which are undistinguishable below. The Pope rises, raises his eyes to heaven, opens wide and closes his arms, and pours out from a full heart, and often with a clear sonorous voice, a blessing on all below. Amidst the clang of bells, the clatter of drums, and the crash of military bands, that reaches the ears only as noise, while the trumpet is yet speaking to the cannoneer, and he to heaven, the vision has vanished: the observed of all observers seems to have melted from before the eye, which finds itself gazing once more on vacancy. The father is gone, but has dropped his blessing on his loving children. Can a more preeminent and singular position be allotted to any other human being? Could any sovereign periodically become, again and again, the centre of anything so magnificent, morally as well as materially? Could he bring together thousands of strangers and of subjects, ambassadors, kings, and even emperors, with multitudes of poor, who would make pilgrimage from distant regions on foot, and collect them



in a grand square, that they might look up to him for a few moments, ay, and fall on their knees during them, as he showed himself at a window of his palace ? The idea of an attempt to do such a thing is so monstrously preposterous, that it excites laughter.

Yet who has ever witnessed the papal benediction at St. Peter's, and pronounced or felt it to contain a single particle of the ridiculous in it ? Or, rather, who has ever thought it less than sublime ? And on what rests the difference ? On an irresistible belief that no earthly elevation gives a power to bless ; that such a power is inherent in the highest degree in one only man ; and that the possession of that single power makes it worth while for the greatest and the least to come any distance to partake, if they believe ; if not, at least to be spectators of its marvellous exercise. Certainly all will agree, that, if it do exist, it could not possibly be used more gloriously, or in a manner more worthy of it. An improvement on this is hardly imaginable ; never did a great occasion so completely create its own circumstances.

If the recollection of a scene so well remembered, because so often witnessed, and generally from the midst of the peasants' position, have carried the writer away from his real subject,

he returns by remarking, how enhanced must the exciting and moving ceremonial of the Pope's blessing have been, in its association with his restoration. It wanted, no doubt, the more dignified and colder attendance of foreign visitors; there were not so many handsome equipages glancing in the sun; but their places were well filled up by the tens of thousands more of fervent subjects, who had poured in from greater distances than usual, to welcome their sovereign and Pontiff. It was at this function, more than in any other portion of his triumphal procession, that the gush of spontaneous emotion became irresistible, and consequently universal; so as to leave no eye tearless, and no heart unmoved.

There can be no reason to doubt the sincerity of these feelings; and that the people in the widest sense of the word rejoiced at the restoration of a native, though an ecclesiastical, government. Indeed this peculiarity was to them a chief recommendation. It had been to them, in their youth, a kind, paternal, and peaceful rule, and they who were too young to remember it, had received their ideas of it from parents and masters, then deploring the changes which they had experienced. It cannot be unfair or unreasonable to appeal to those who had tried a

variety, for a rational opinion as to a preference. A generation has intervened since those days of bitter recollection, during which, no doubt, much has been forgotten of family sorrows, and public decline; the love of change and passion for novelty, which are inherent in youth, forming indeed phases of its characteristic feeling of hope, are strong enough to counteract the pleadings of experience, and give a reality in the imagination to specious promises of an untested future.

In proof of these assertions we may observe, that when, in 1821, Naples was disturbed by a revolution that overthrew the throne, inflammatory proclamations were spread through the papal dominions, calling on the people to rise and join the four revolutionary camps at Pesaro, Macerata, Spoleto, and Frosinone. Cardinal Consalvi, in the name of the Pope, issued a proclamation, in which he merely reminded the people of their past experience, expressing his assurance that a word would suffice to secure them against the evil intentions of traitors. He bade them remember "how chimerical and deceitful, in past attempts to overthrow social order, had been the prospects held out of an imaginary happiness; how false the promises to protect religion, to recompense virtue; how frail and delusive the assurances of a better administration of justice,

of greater liberty, of a diminution of imposts, and increase of salaries." And he expressed all confidence, that these reminiscences and experiences would be a sufficient antidote against all seditious and rebellious attempts.

Nor was he deceived. The storm passed by harmless; no rising took place; and the people showed how the appeal to experience came home to their convictions.

## CHAPTER VI.

## CARDINAL CONSALVI.

It is impossible to treat of the latter portion of this Pontificate, especially to make any allusion to the principles of its government, without bringing before the reader's notice the man whose figure mingles with every reminiscence of the period, and who was the very spring and regulator of the entire policy which distinguished it. This was Hercules Consalvi, the prime minister of Pius from his restoration till his death.

He was born in 1756 ; consequently had received his education long before the symptoms of what afterwards convulsed Europe had fairly manifested themselves. Early impressions are usually so deep as not to be effaced by subsequent ones made over them ; and it is possible that the partiality which Consalvi always manifested towards England, in his political career, may be traceable to the early kindness and favour which

he received from one who always considered and called himself an Englishman. The last of the Stuarts, the amiable and beneficent Cardinal Henry, or as he loved to be called, the Cardinal Duke, or the Duke of York, was bishop of Frascati, and would never exchange his see for those which officially belong to the Dean and Subdean of the Sacred College. Of that prettily situated city, successor of Tusculum, which yet gives the bishop his title, he is still considered the great benefactor. Whatever else may have been wanting for his title, to a royal heart he was no pretender. His charities were without bounds ; poverty and distress were unknown in his see. The episcopal palace was almost, if not entirely, rebuilt by him, though he generally resided in a neighbouring villa ; the cathedral was much improved, and richly furnished. But the seminary, or diocesan ecclesiastical College, was the object of his peculiar care. Most of it was built by him, and the library, a most elegant apartment, and rich in many English works, was the fruit of his munificence. Though he was not himself either learned or endowed with great abilities, he knew the value of both, engaged excellent professors for his seminary, and brought men of genius round him. Hence his college was frequented not only by aspirants to the clerical state, but by

youths of the best families, destined for secular professions.<sup>1</sup>

Among these was the young Roman Ercole, or Hercules Consalvi. There he distinguished himself, and at some public exhibition caught the eye of the Cardinal bishop, who honoured it, according to custom, with his presence. Let not the

<sup>1</sup> The diocese of Frascati was full, when the author first knew it, of recollections of the Cardinal Duke, all demonstrative of his singular goodness and simplicity of character. He was accessible to the innocent flattery paid by recognition of his rank : and it is recorded of the late Duke of Sussex, that he generously addressed him by the title which he loved, that of "Royal Highness." One is so used to hear little that is good of the Fourth George, that it is pleasing to remember, how, in the days of the excellent Cardinal's old age and distress, by loss of his pensions and benefices through the French invasion, the Prince offered him a pension, which was gratefully accepted ; and afterwards gave Canova the commission for the Stuart monument—not the happiest production of his chisel—the erection of which in St. Peter's the writer well remembers. The Cardinal always spoke highly and kindly of the reigning family. He left endowments for the education of ecclesiastical students for Scotland.

His munificence was extended to other objects. Being arch-priest of St. Peter's, he presented that basilica with a splendid gold chalice, encrusted with the jewels of the Sobieski family ; and this being still kept in his house when the treasury of the church was plundered, escaped the spoliation, and, till three years ago, was used at the great pontifical celebrations at St. Peter's.

One more anecdote may find place here, related by one who knew him well. When he first came to Rome, so ignorant was he of the value of coins, that once, on having been shown some place or object of curiosity, he was asked what should be given to the attendant. As he was puzzled, his chamberlain suggested ; " Shall I give him a *zecchino* ?" a gold piece, worth about 10s. Thinking that the diminutive termination must indicate small coin, the duke replied, " I think that is too little. Give him a *grosso* : " a silver 5d.

reader be startled if he hears, that it was rather by the ornamental than by the useful arts that the future statesman captivated the good Duke bishop's affections. It is said to have been his skill and grace in a musical performance that first attracted this notice.

Be this as it may, it appears that the young man himself was favoured early with one of those presentiments of future destiny which are the privilege of genius. He possessed, while yet a boy in college, that latent consciousness of power, of energy, and of perseverance which creates success ; one may say, speaking profanely, that confidence in one's star, more religiously, that trust in Providence, which encourages to extraordinary efforts a genius otherwise timid and distrustful of itself. Many a gifted mind has pined away, and faded early, from want of this sustaining confidence in a higher direction. But of those who have succeeded in doing anything good for mankind, there can be few who have not experienced early a craving for it, a deep sentiment that they must attempt it, and a strong assurance that they were only to be instruments in higher, and stronger, and better hands, for their appointed work. By some, indolence and pride may be mistaken for this holy consciousness of future power ; but the difference



of objects proposed will generally give an easy test of the source of either feeling. However, few have the courage to proclaim sentiments which may be so easily mis-attributed ; and this the young Consalvi did not hesitate to do. We may imagine that his audience, at one of those annual exhibitions common in all continental colleges, were astonished to hear him openly avow his assurance of future distinction, fame, and wealth. This he did in a poetical composition, which fortunately has been preserved in the library of the Frascati seminary, and deserves to be published here, I believe for the first time.<sup>1</sup>

It is written in the taste of the last century, in that now intolerable allegory, which clothes virtues in the dress of pagan divinities, and personifies, as good or evil beings of another order, the qualities, actions, or sufferings of man. It will be seen also from the title that the young Marquis Consalvi was already a member of the Arcadia, the great poetical society of Rome, and bore in consequence a name bucolic, as well as his family designation.

<sup>1</sup> Some time before his death, perhaps a year or two, the Cardinal had privately printed a sort of medical autobiography. It was a minute account of all his maladies, and the treatment of them by physicians, probably drawn up for consultation. I read it at the time, and remember some curious particulars, but have not been able to procure a copy.

“DEL SIGR. MARCHESE ERCOLE CONSALVI,

FRA GLI ARCADI FLORIDANTE ERMINIANO,

SUL RITORNO AI SUOI STUDI

POEMETTO.

“Mè che riporto alle belle arti, e ai dolci  
Industri studj desioso il piede,  
E che dal lungo vaneggiar richiamo  
Quelle che mille immagini vezzose  
E mille idee in un sol punto, e in uno  
Momento suol pittrice fantasia  
Vaga crear : Pallade amica, e sola  
Dolce conforto, e non minor diletto  
Di quei, cui porser pargoletto il latte  
Le suore che hanno sede in sul Parnasso,  
Con lieto sguardo caramente accogli :  
L' egida poni, e la terribil asta  
Onde t' armi la destra, e svegli in petto  
Cui delicato cor alto spavento.  
Tu cortese qual sei, Tritonia Diva,  
Figlia del sommo reggitor de' Numi,  
Porgimi aita ; piano e facil dammi  
Questo sentiero, e i voti miei seconda.  
Io sovra d' esso affretterò ben ratto  
I passi miei, e tergerò pur lieto  
Dalla pallida fronte i miei sudori.  
Se allor che a destra ed a sinistra io volgo  
Il guardo, a te mirar, Diva, vedrotti  
Oltre l' usato tuo lieta guardarmi,  
Con dolce riso sulla rosea bocca,  
Con bella grazia alle ridenti ciglia,  
Un tuo sorriso, od un gentil tuo detto,  
Conforterammi il cuor tremante, e a lui  
Darà lena bastante. Allor, sì, allor  
Vengane pure, il bieco guardo torva  
Con quelle scarne sue livide guancie  
E con quelle aggrottate orride ciglia

L' indefessa mai sempre aspra fatica,  
 Non mai stanca in operare, e mi minacci  
 Lunghe, e fiere vigilie, affanni, e stenti.  
 Io sì, che sotto la tua scorta, a vile  
 Terrò li stenti, ed ogni duro affanno  
 Ed ogni angoscia, sprezzèrò ben forte  
 La Donna iniqua, e di costanza armato  
 E più che smalto invigorito il petto,  
 A giogo la terrò ; farolle il torvo  
 Ciglio abbassar. Sì giungerò là dove  
 Mi guida dolce amabile desio,  
 Che di bella speranza esser si pregia  
 Parto gentil, che via pur troppo al cuore  
 Mi fa invito, e lusinga. Aspettan, sollo,  
 Me onor, gloria, ricchezza, al bell' oprare  
 Sprone, e conforto desiabil. Certo  
 È questo il fato mio : questa è la tela  
 Che tra le man del ciel, per me s' intesse,  
 Ma che ? forse sogn' io ? e non piuttosto  
 Sì verace m' aspira amico nume ?  
 Non che non sogno, e lo vedrò fra poco,  
 Quando, per bella amabile fortuna,  
 Contento, e lieto di me stesso i giorni  
 Passar vedrammi ognun che al fuso eterno  
 L' immite Parca tutto dî mi fila  
 E tutt' altro sarò da quel che or sono."

It may not be amiss to add a translation, for  
 the benefit of those who cannot follow the ori-  
 ginal ; which, it must be owned, is rather verbose,  
 and yet cramped in expression. It shall be as  
 literal as possible.

## "VERSES BY THE MARQUIS HERCULES CONSALVI,

## ON RETURNING TO RESUME HIS STUDIES.

"ME,—who recall my willing steps, to tread  
Once more the course of studious toil, relieved  
By noble arts ; who lure from dreamy flights  
The thoughts and fancies which, with rapid strokes,  
Imagination artist-like creates ;—  
Me smiling greet, and tenderly embrace,  
Pallas ! the friend and only soothing stay,  
Or rather certain joy of him, whose lips  
The Nine who dwell on the Parnassian hill  
Were first to moisten with their purest milk.

"Put by thine ægis, lay aside the spear  
That arms thy hand with terror, and affrights  
The timid heart that dwells in gentle breast.  
Tritonian Goddess !—Daughter of great Jove !—  
Bestow thine aid ; the path whereon I tread  
Make smooth and straight ; my yearnings bear on high.  
With thee propitious I will haste along,  
And cheerful wipe my moist and pallid brow.  
If, when on either side I look for thee,  
I see thee, Goddess ! more than is thy wont,  
Regard me kindly, with a gracious eye,  
And on thy rosy lips a cheerful smile ;  
That smile alone, yet more a soothing word,  
Will still my panting heart, and give me breath.

"Then come, indeed, with gruff and sidelong gaze,  
From the rough caverns, 'neath her beetling brows,  
And with her hollow cheeks and sallow skin,  
Hard-fisted and hard-minded, cheerless Toil ;  
And threaten me with long and weary watch  
By night, and straining breathless work by day.  
For, by thee guided, I will make but light  
Of cramping labour, and of anguish dire.  
That Dame unjust, with strength and patience armed  
I will defy ; with adamant breast  
Will bend her head, and yoke her to my car.

“ Yes, I will reach the goal, which sweet Desire,  
Most noble offspring, as she boasts, of Hope,  
Points to, with flattering look that wins my heart.  
There—oh, I know it!—honour, glory, wealth,  
Await me, goad and prize to honest deeds.  
Certain is this my lot: this is the web  
Woven for me in heaven's unfailing loom.

“ But stay—dream I, perchance? or does some God  
Benignant whisper to me happy truths?  
No, no, I dream not; full soon shall I know it,  
When all shall see me, by fair Fortune's love,  
Pass through the days which Fate unsparing spins  
On her eternal distaff for my destiny,  
Joyful, contented with myself; for then  
Far other shall I be than now I am.”

Success waited on this precocious confidence, and to what extent the patronage which he early won assisted the youthful poet, cannot be fully known. Probably, however, York<sup>1</sup> did him better service than Pallas. Consalvi passed through the usual preliminary steps, by which the cardinalate is attained, *in curia*; for he never was a nuncio abroad; nor did he ever take priest's orders, so as to be more immediately

<sup>1</sup> There are several medals of the Cardinal Duke, commemorating his title. One is rather a coin struck in his name, *sede vacante*,—this being the privilege of the Vice-chancellor at such periods. It bears the royal arms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, surmounted by a cardinal's hat over a ducal coronet. On the reverse is the legend, “Henricus Cardinalis Dux Ebor., S.R.E. Vice-cancellarius. Sede vacan. 1769.” Another is a large medal with his portrait, and nearly the same inscription, with the addition of *Ep. Tuscul.* On the reverse is a figure of Religion, with his crown and hat at her feet, and the legend round, “Non desideriiis hominum, sed voluntate Dei.” On the exergue is the date 1766.

employed in purely ecclesiastical administration. On the 11th of August, 1800, he was named Cardinal Deacon of the Church of St. Mary ad Martyres, better known as the Pantheon.

Although he early enjoyed the confidence of Pius VII., it was not till a later period that his extraordinary powers became known and admired throughout Europe. So distinguished, indeed, was he among the Roman *prelatura*, that the Sacred College assembled in the conclave which elected Pius VII. at Venice, in 1800, chose him for their secretary, and he was immediately named pro-secretary of State by the new Pontiff.

At the period of Pius's removal from Rome and Italy, Cardinal Consalvi did not hold the highest office, which, as we have seen, was occupied most worthily by Cardinal Pacca. But he shared his sovereign's exile, and was one of the "black cardinals" of Paris, that is, one forbidden to wear the distinctive colour of his order. After this period began that prosperity of public life, which shone so brightly in his youthful vision. For one, who had been educated in the comparative seclusion of the Roman government and court, to find himself suddenly transferred from this, and even from banishment, into contact with the most brilliant array of camp and court celebrities which

Europe had ever seen united, and what was more, with the council of such statesmen, most cunning in their craft, as sovereigns could bring together, to watch over their interests, and to have to play his part among them, with skill, with tact, and with success equal to any, was a position and a task to which only genius of high order could be equal. And this, certainly, Consalvi was found to possess. The Emperors of Russia and Austria, the Kings of Prussia and France, Wellington, Blucher, Metternich, Castlereagh, and a host of plenipotentiaries of claimants of states and principalities, and representatives of every form of government had to be made acquaintance with, to be gained, and to be treated with, by the representative of one, whom all no doubt respected, but to whom all were not so ready to be generous, if just. In the settlement of claims, and the adjustment of pretensions which were about to ensue, Consalvi was deputed by the Pope to regain for him and his successors the many provinces of which he had been stripped. This was a difficult and a delicate task. But before pressing forward to the conclusion of this matter, we must dwell on an interesting episode in it.

In the June of 1814, the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia visited London, and many will remember the fêtes, splendid but

somewhat childish, which greeted them. The writer retains them among his holiday reminiscences, for they took place in vacation time : and they belonged decidedly to the age of pavilions and pagodas. At the same time Cardinal Consalvi crossed the Straits, and appeared in London. He was bearer of a brief, or letter, to the Prince Regent, from the Pope. Let it be remembered, that the penal laws as yet were in force, and that the dreadful penalties of *præmunire* cut off all friendly commerce between the ruler of these realms, and the Head of the Catholic Church. How this first Cardinal who had landed in England since the days of Pole was treated and received, will best be learnt from the account which Pius VII. gave of the event, in his Allocution to the Consistory of September the 4th, 1815.

“The Cardinal, having quickly reached Paris, and having discharged those duties which we had confided to him towards his most Christian Majesty, and having been received with that interest and affection for us which it was natural to expect from his piety and religion, proceeded to London without delay ; whither the other sovereigns, with the exception of our beloved Son in Christ, Francis Emperor of Austria, had gone. And here we cannot sufficiently express to you what feelings of joy and gratitude filled us, on



learning what occurred on that occasion, in that most splendid city, capital of so mighty a kingdom. For the first time since more than 200 years, a Cardinal of the holy Roman Church, and moreover a Legate of this Apostolic See, appeared publicly in that city, by the kind and generous permission of the government, adorned with the distinctive badge of his dignity, in the same way as if he had been in this our own city.

“And further, when he proceeded to an audience of His Royal Highness, the Prince Regent of England, to present our brief, and express the sentiments of admiration, friendship, and attachment which we entertain towards him, as well as towards that valiant, and in so many ways illustrious, nation, he was received at the palace with such marks of benevolence and of kindness for us whom he represented, as could with difficulty have been exceeded. On which account, professing ourselves deeply obliged to that prince, and to the different orders that compose that generous nation, towards which we always entertained great good-will, we most gladly seize such an occasion to attest thus publicly our esteem, and our lively gratitude.”

The Pope goes on to say that in this city the Cardinal set vigorously about his work, laying before the monarchs here assembled the claims

of the Holy See to the restoration of its dismembered provinces. The success of this first appeal made the Pope rejoice, as he himself tells us, at the selection which he had made for his minister.

It was, however, at the Congress of Vienna that the diplomatic battle had to be fought. The decree of Napoleon of Feb. 10, 1814, which released the Pope from captivity, only restored to him the Departments of Rome and of Thrasy-mene. The richest and fairest of his provinces were still to be regained : and they were tempting additions to more powerful dominions. The ability, perseverance, and admirable tact of Cardinal Consalvi won them back. He seems to have been quite in his place among the most acute diplomatists of the assembly. He even gained their admiration and esteem ; and of none more than of the representative of England. It is said that Lord Castlereagh remarked of him that he was the master of them all in diplomatic skill.

His efforts were crowned with complete success, as to the great objects of his mission. He had right, indeed, on his side ; but in great political congresses, the interests of the weak are often sacrificed to the wishes of the strong, under the disguise of general principles, or of simpler balances, which require the rounding of large sums by the absorption of fractions. He always used

to say that he received generous support from the representatives of Great Britain and Prussia; and on one point, the precedence of nuncios among ambassadors, the Pope, in the allocution above quoted, makes particular mention of this assistance. All obstacles were at length overcome; about the middle of June, 1815, Monsignor Mazio, Secretary to the Cardinal Plenipotentiary, arrived in Rome from Vienna, with the welcome tidings, that the three Legations, the Marches of Ancona, and the Duchies of Benevento and Ponte Corvo had been recognised as integral parts of the Papal States. The Cardinal energetically protested against the retention of the French possessions, and of a territory beyond the Po.

If the reader wish to know the character of the statesman who, in his first essay, rose to the level of the old experienced ministers and negotiators of continental Europe, he shall have it in the words of an English lady, married into a noble French family, and remarkable for her shrewdness and keenness in determining character. She had the honour of receiving Cardinal Consalvi into her house at Rouen, during his exile in France: "Perhaps," she said a few years after, to an intimate friend of the Cardinal's, "you will be surprised to hear what I am going to tell you, as to

the opinion which I formed of your tutor at Vienna, before he had been a fortnight in my house. *True* humility in a most extraordinary and heroic degree is the characteristic of this Cardinal, and therefore he must have been the first politician at the Congress of Vienna."

When he returned to Rome, he had to undertake the reorganisation of the entire state after years of dismemberment, the formation of a new magistracy, the re-establishment of new municipal, financial, and ecclesiastical systems. On the manner in which much of this was done this is not the place to treat. It will be sufficient to observe, that, through the remainder of the pontificate, the entire rule might be said to rest upon his shoulders; that, while the Pope gave him his full confidence, and trusted him as Pharaoh trusted Joseph, he was indefatigable, single-hearted, devoted, mind and soul, to the service of his master. He seemed to care for no other object. He had, of course, his opponents in policy, perhaps rivals of his influence. A man placed, not so much in an elevated, as in a singular position, must disturb many below him,—

"Urit enim splendore suo qui prægravat artes  
Infra se positas."

But he seems to have borne all opposition, and

even obloquy, with equanimity and placid forbearance.

His habits were most simple. There was no luxury about him in house or person. His dress was not more than decent. His tastes were refined. If in early youth he attracted the notice of an eminent patron by his taste and skill in music, he became in his turn the friend and protector of another, to whom music was a profession. This was Cimarosa, the well-known composer of the *Matrimonio segreto*, and of much excellent sacred music. Like Mozart, he composed a splendid Requiem, which he dedicated and gave to his friend the Cardinal. He, in his turn, had it executed for the first time at the composer's obsequies performed by his orders. Connected with his diplomatic missions, is an anecdote relating to a man of singular acquirements.

While at Vienna, many learned men from all parts of Germany were naturally introduced to him, and he was repeatedly asked how was Ignatius De Rossi. The Cardinal felt mortified at not being able to answer, for, to tell the truth, he did not know whom they meant. One of his first cares, on returning to Rome, was to search after him; and certainly the inquiry, in some respects, cannot have been satisfactory. He would find an old man, as I have often seen him,

bent with age, dressed in an old cassock, and a coeval cloak, tottering, as he leant on his stick and muttered to himself, up and down the immeasurable corridors of the Roman College, or sat in one of the recesses that give them light. Day after day have I and others seen him, and respectfully saluted that wreck of a rare genius, and of a learning scarcely surpassed; and a courteous gleam lighted up his lack-lustre eye, as he unfailingly returned the greeting. He was indeed past caring for, though he wanted for no comfort. During these last years of mental helplessness, through which he would brook no control, his room, left always unguarded, had been pilfered of rich treasures of learning, among them of the manuscript of a huge Arabic lexicon, which he would never publish, from his horror of correcting proofs. He used to say, after the printing of his other works, that if the tempter had now to deal with another Job, and wished to make him lose his patience, he would induce him to try his hand at publishing an Oriental work. However, the Cardinal added to his comforts, by immediately granting him an additional pension.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This extraordinary man is not so generally known as his illustrious namesake and contemporary at Parma, the collector of the greatest number of Hebrew manuscripts ever brought together.

The Cardinal's affections were warm and faithful. Those who were officially connected with him were sincerely attached to him ; and those whom he received to audience, after they had gained his esteem, would be welcomed with a cordial embrace. The chief sharer, however, of

Yet in learning, extensive and deep; he was much his superior. In 1788, he published at Rome his *Commentationes Laertianæ*. Some one has said, "If you wish to appear learned, quote Diogenes Laertius." But this is really a work of deep reading and rare acquaintance with ancient philology and philosophy. After a long interval, in 1807, he published, at the Propaganda press, his *Etymologiæ Ægyptianæ*. It was a valuable precursor to Young and Champollion's discoveries ; for it treats, in alphabetical order, of all the Egyptian words quoted in ancient writers, sacred and profane, with an immense spontaneous flow of varied erudition, Rabbinical, Oriental, classical, and patristic. On the receipt of this wonderful work, the Academy of Leipsig held an extraordinary meeting, and wrote a most complimentary letter to the author. This was mentioned to Cardinal Consalvi at Vienna. The Cardinal had been absent from Rome some years.

The memory of this learned and most modest man can only be compared to that of Magliabecchi, and other such prodigies. I will give one example of it, related to me by a witness, his fellow-professor, the late Canon Lattanzi. When once at *villeggiatura*, at Tivoli, De Rossi offered, on being given a line in any of the four great Italian poets, to continue on, reciting a hundred lines, without a mistake. No one thought it possible ; but, to the amazement of all, he perfectly succeeded. He was then asked, if he would do the same with the Latin classics, to which he replied : "It is twenty years since I read the Italian poets, and then it was only for amusement : of the Latin classics I have been professor, so you had better not try me." The late Cardinal Cappaccini, secretary and friend to Cardinal Consalvi, used to tell how, when he was one of De Rossi's pupils in Hebrew, if the scholars wished to *shirk* the lesson, they would put a question to their professor, who would start off on a lecture in reply that might have been taken down and published : a marvellous tessellation of Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and Italian quotations.

his dearer affections was his brother the Marquis Andrew Consalvi. He was ten years younger, but he predeceased the Cardinal by eleven years, dying in 1813. The latter, however, never forgot their tender love, and kept a compact made between them of sharing but one grave. Accordingly, in the Pantheon, where, as its Deacon, he ought to have been buried, only a cenotaph, or rather an urn containing his heart, preserves his memory; with an inscription and bust erected by subscription of his many friends. But in the church of St. Marcellus is a modest tomb, on which it is inscribed that there repose the bodies of the two brothers:—

QUI . CUM . SINGULARI . AMORE . DUM . VIVEBANT  
 SE . MUTUO . DILEXISSENT  
 CORPORA . ETIAM . SUA  
 UNA . EADEMQUE . URNA . CONDI . VOLUERUNT.

In the transaction of business, the Cardinal Secretary of State was most assiduous. In addition to the burthen of his manifold duties, he had, according to Italian custom, to devote certain hours of the day to audiences, not bespoken beforehand, but granted to all ranks, and all descriptions of persons. His memory and accuracy in the discharge of this often irksome duty were wonderful. After he had admitted separately all those whose position or known busi-



ness entitled them to this distinction, he sallied forth into his ante-room, filled with humbler suppliants. He passed from one to another, heard with patience what each had to say, took his memorial from his hand, and named a day for his answer. Female petitioners were admitted separately, often while he partook of his solitary and simple meal, in the middle of the day; when they were allowed more scope for prolixity of speech. To those who came for their replies, he was ever ready to give them, in writing, or by word of mouth; and it is said, that seldom or never<sup>1</sup> did he mistake a

<sup>1</sup> I remember an exception which was quoted. A little stout man, with an irresistibly comical countenance, whom I recollect as a dilettante singer of *buffo* songs at private parties, and whose name was Felci, had applied for a situation. When his name was announced, the Cardinal mistook it for that of an *employé*, with a name very similar, as Delci, who had been guilty of some neglect of duty, and who had been summoned to receive a scolding. This fell on the head of the innocent aspirant, and at first overwhelmed him with its pelting storm of reproaches. He gradually began to see through the tempest, and to recover his breath. He perceived the mistake, waited till the hail-cloud had passed, threw himself, or rather subsided, into his own naturally good-humoured looks, and replied to the Cardinal,—“Your Eminence is mistaken :—

“Quello è magro, ed io son grasso ;  
 Quello è alto, ed io son basso ;  
 Quello è impiegato, ed io sto a spasso.”

“That man is lean, and I am stout ;  
 He is a tree, and I'm a sprout ;  
 He is *in* place, and I am *out*.”

It need hardly be added, that this improvisation dispelled all anger, and procured the petitioner what he had come to solicit.


person, or his business, though he had only learnt them for the first time, some weeks before.

His eye indeed seemed the outward symbol of his intelligence. Deeply seated under shaggy and overhanging brows, it had a sharp penetrating point of light, which looked you through, without suggesting a thought of keenness or of cunning. It was the brilliancy of a gem, not of a fire-spark. His countenance had a mildness in it, which modified any sharpness of expression apparent in his eagle eye. His voice also was soft, though perhaps rather husky and unmusical.

The poem which we have quoted, as the youthful vaticination of his future greatness, mentioned "wealth" as one of those blessings towards which his eager mind seemed to bound forward. That he accumulated, through the income of his offices and benefices, a considerable fortune, there is no doubt. But he lived without luxury, and in the papal palace free of many charges, and with the utmost simplicity; he certainly spent but little on himself, and he was no lover of money. Whatever he had saved, he left chiefly for religious and charitable purposes. By his will he bequeathed his diplomatic presents, three very rich snuff-boxes, to

complete the unfinished fronts of three churches, Araceli, the Consolazione, and San Rocco. He left trifling legacies to friends, among others to the Duchess of Devonshire, and some of Lord Castlereagh's family, and to the Duchess of Albany, a graceful acknowledgment of his obligations to the Stuarts, of whom she was the last representative. The bulk of his property he willed to Propaganda for the support of foreign missions, subject to annuities to his dependents, one or two of which remain unexpired.

The Pope and his minister seemed providentially made for each other. The comprehensive and energetic mind of Consalvi, his noble views and his industrious love of details, filled up that void which might otherwise have succeeded the restoration, and have created disappointment, after the admiration and love that years of exile had won for the Pontiff. The wise and gentle and unshaken confidence of the prince, gave ample room for expansion to the abilities and growing experience of the minister. Without the one the other would have been useless ; and whichever failed first, seemed sure to lead to the extinction of the other. Indeed they fitted so truly together, that even physically they may be said to have proved



equal. The amount of vigour, health, and power meted out to the secretary was in just proportion to his need of them. He retained them as long as they were required by him, for whose comfort and glory they had been intrusted to him.

The Pope died August 20th, 1823, and his successor, Leo XII., was elected on the 28th of September following. Of course there were different sentiments prevalent in Rome concerning Consalvi's principles of administration. Every prime minister falls, more than most men, under the Horatian principle,

. . . . "Laudatur ab his, culpatur ab illis."

The new Pope belonged perhaps to another school of politics, or he may have entertained less friendly feelings towards the person of Consalvi. At any rate, Cardinal della Somaglia, a man of high merit and character, was named Secretary of State. But it is doubtful whether the broken health of Consalvi would have allowed him to continue in office. Probably he had outlaboured his strength, and had concealed the failure of his health under exhausting efforts, so long as his good patron required his assistance. In the journal kept by a warm admirer of the Cardinal, I find the following

served, and the friend whom he had affectionately loved.

. . . . . "Quos ignea virtus  
Innocuos vitæ, patientes ætheris imi  
Fecit, et æternos animam collegit in orbes."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Two days after the Cardinal's death, the Pope said to Monsignor Testa, who has been before spoken of, 'Che cose mi ha detto quell'uomo, l'ultima volta che l'ho veduto!' Then hanging down his head, he added: 'Ma sembra che Dio vuol castigarmi in tutte le maniere.'"—*MS. Journal*. The Cardinal's body, when embalmed, disclosed the causes of his death. The lungs were found indurated with many adhesions, and the heart was enlarged to preternatural dimensions.

## CHAPTER VII.

## POLICY OF PIUS THE SEVENTH'S GOVERNMENT.

WITHOUT entering into any general considerations on the subject of government, or discussing its best forms, or even expressing any opinion about them, but, on the other hand, judging things in their own times and places, and by the only principles then and there applicable to them, one may say unhesitatingly that the government of Pius VII., through his minister Consalvi, was just, liberal, and enlightened. No doubt, had that sovereign re-enacted the laws under which his subjects had groaned as an oppression, and re-established the republic which they still detested as a usurpation ; had he acted in the teeth of all Europe, in spite of every principle which guided its sovereigns and statesmen in his restoration ; had he even thereby risked for himself another catastrophe, and for Italy another war, there might now-a-days be many who would extol him as a hero, and almost deify him as a man beyond and above his age. Had he acted

so, however, at that time, he would have been ridiculed, deserted, and abused by all parties, whig or tory, conservative or radical, as a fanatic, an unseasonable phenomenon, a man behind the age, which had outgrown revolutionary fancies, in fine, a dotard who had better have been translated from the cell of a prison to that of an asylum, than restored from exile to a throne. We doubt if even the sorry compliment of a newspaper paragraph would have been paid him for his pains.

He was restored, as Pope, to the temporal government of the portion of Italy held by his predecessors, without share in the warlike achievements of other princes, without a claim to the prizes of their victories. He was restored concurrently by Protestant and Catholic Powers, with the applause of the civilised world; and amidst the acclamations of joy, or rather in accordance with the longings, of his own subjects. He was restored on the principle which formed the basis of all restorations at the time, that Europe, so long convulsed, and so long unsettled, should return to the normal state from which she had been wrenched. Empires were restored as empires, kingdoms resettled as kingdoms, grand-duchies as grand-duchies, republics as republics. And so the Pope was given back to

Rome, to rule as Popes had done, by a system exceptional, and in a form the loss of which experience had proved to be hurtful. The independence of the Pope, that is, the combination in one of spiritual rule over the whole Catholic Church with a temporal limited sovereignty, had been sensibly demonstrated to be an important element in the readjustment of Europe. The evils resulting from the subjection of the common Father of all the faithful to one of his more powerful children, had been universally felt ; and the continuation of such an irregular condition by a peaceful subjugation of the ecclesiastical to any lay power, would have been only providing for the habitual derangement of religious action.

During the invasion of Northern Italy by the French in 1797, the Pope, then Cardinal Bishop of Imola, had been placed in a situation of great difficulty, which required both tact and courage ; and he had displayed both. While he retained the firmest fidelity to his sovereign, he exhorted his people to submit to the overwhelming power of the enemy, and not tempt them, by an irritating and useless resistance, to put in execution their barbarous threats of universal massacre and destruction by fire of cities and villages. A fierce and disorderly insurrection at Lugo,



proved how real and earnest was the menace. General Augereau, on the 8th of July, completely defeated the foolish patriots, and delivered their city to a sack, which in three hours stripped it of an incredible amount of plunder. It lasted no longer, because Chiaramonti, who had in vain addressed the inhabitants, humbled himself so far, as to cast himself on his knees before the French general, and refused to rise till the boon of mercy which he craved was granted.

His position, however, was too embarrassing ; and his friend Pope Pius VI. called him to Rome. He entreated to be allowed to return to his people, to shield them from danger, when a new peril surprised him. The Austrians, subsidised by England, were for a short time masters of the province of Æmilia, and were approaching Imola, when the bishop considered it his duty to exhort his people to submit to them, as their liberators from the yoke imposed upon them. No sooner had the Austrians retired than he was accused of sedition. Instead of flying from the danger, he proceeded at once to the French head-quarters at Lugo, and there pleaded his own cause before the general, whom he knew to be most hostile to him, with such gentleness and firmness, as won from that soldier expressions of esteem and marks of honour.

His enemies, however, were not so satisfied; and the republican magistrates of Imola denounced him to the supreme authorities of Bologna, as having favoured the Austrians. Letters to him, from Cardinals Gioannetti and Mattei, containing circulars addressed by them to their flocks in favour of Austria, were intercepted, and formed the groundwork of the charge; fabrications and exaggerations composed its superstructure. The French general, incensed, started at once with a large detachment of troops, proclaiming that the Cardinal should be severely punished, and his see rifled. The bishop left his city by night, not to flee, but to face the danger. He was too good a shepherd to leave his sheep to the wolf, and escape at their sacrifice. Boldly he directed his steps towards the approaching spoilers. The general was Macdonald. Chiaramonti met him face to face: with apostolic liberty, he reproved him strongly for his intended barbarity, and vindicated frankly his own conduct. He prevailed; and saved the city from destruction or devastation. It is not wonderful that his biographers should have compared this intrepid and generous conduct to that of St. Leo the Great meeting Attila.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This was his third or fourth escape. At an earlier period, when the Cisalpine republic was established, he denounced it to

When, only three years after these occurrences, Chiaramonti found himself the occupant of the throne, the outworks of which he had so resolutely defended against republican and anti-Christian invasion, when he felt placed at the head of a warfare, the outposts of which he had known so well how to guard, we cannot be surprised to see him only more determined in upholding the same principles of firm but prudent resistance, and consistent preservation of what he had received. The same courage in meeting an enemy face to face, and the same bold adhesion to duty, will be found blended with the same condescension, and readiness to avoid useless resistance and fruitless collision. Some things which at first sight might be considered as the result of weakness, may be traceable to this quality.

The first public acts of the new Pontiff showed that, nevertheless, he was above prejudices, and well understood sound principles of political economy. Besides excellent provisions for reforms in every department of public administration, in that of justice among others, two series of measures characterised the commencement of

his flock, and was accused to the Paris Directory, by the police of Milan. He vindicated himself so powerfully as not to be removed from his diocese. Again, he refused to take the "civic oath," as it was called, and was deprived of the maintenance (the *mensa*) of his see.

his reign. The first regarded free trade in provisions, and a considerable approach to it in other departments of commerce. There was a great and alarming scarcity of grain in Central Italy, the year of the Pope's accession, 1800. There was literally a *panic* in the public mind in consequence ; and the exportation of cereals from the States was forbidden. But, by a decree issued in September of that year, free trade in corn was permitted; and the corporation of bakers was abolished with its exclusive privileges, so as to make it free to all to bake and sell bread. All duty was also taken off oil, and its free importation was permitted. These new measures took the public by surprise ; but they were soon much extended. For, early in the following year, all provisions were brought under the same regulations ; and five more sources of revenue were thrown open to public competition. The edict on this subject, the result of a special commission, was long, and entitled, "Decree *motu proprio* on provisions and free trade ;" and bears the date of March 11, 1801. The annual medal struck for the Feast of SS. Peter and Paul that year bears the figure of Abundance, with a ship at its side, and the inscription —

COMMERCIORVM . PRIVILEGIA . ABOLITA.

In the mean time the treasury was empty ; the treaty of Tolentino had drained every available resource ; even the four tiaras, of immense price and beautiful workmanship<sup>1</sup>, had been stripped of their jewels to pay the ruinous contribution of six millions of dollars imposed by it in 1796. A new system of general taxation was necessary to supply the urgent and current wants of the government. This was published about the same period, prefaced by a candid, but mournful acknowledgment of the exhausted condition of the public purse. The system involved a very complicated, but most important, operation, which was not fully carried out till 1803, that of embodying in the debts of the state those of provincial, or at least municipal governments, the state at the same time undertaking the administration of their real property, as security to itself.

As far as one can judge at this distance of time, it would appear that the internal policy, directed by Cardinal Consalvi from the very outset, was enlightened, perhaps, beyond that of many greater states. That policy is the one pursued by the present Pontiff, who has been yearly reducing the duties, and other pressures

<sup>1</sup> One was of the golden period of Julius II.

upon import-commerce ; and has been getting rid of monopolies, or rather, the farming of internal resources, with the most gratifying success.

Another evil of the past calamitous period had been the total depreciation of the coinage. A quantity of base metal, as well as a copper currency, had been put into circulation, with artificial values, after 1793 ; and the usual ill-judged attempts had been resorted to, of raising them, when fallen in the market, by public authority. The last of these useless efforts, by the Commissioner Naselli, in 1800, before the Pope's arrival, had only produced embarrassment and diminished commercial confidence. The Pope, however, and his minister took a better view of this monetary difficulty. Several schemes were proposed, by which loss would have fallen heavily on the holders of the debased circulation, in clearing the country of it, and were unhesitatingly rejected. Instead of this, a fair and current value was assigned to it, and it was received at that rate by all government offices, and at the mint, and no more was reissued. This was in December, 1801, and January 13, 1802. In October the plan was completed. On the 5th of that month all the base coin was called in, and Government bore the entire loss. A million and a half of dol-

lars were paid out in silver, all over the States, and not a coin of inferior metal left in circulation. And from that day till the late republic, no country in Europe had a better or more abundant silver circulation than the Papal States.

The measure was, however, completed by the readjustment of all public contracts made under the previous condition of the money market, and tables were published giving the proportions between the values of the old and new coinages, so as to assist all classes to remodel existing engagements on an equitable basis.

Never was any measure more blessed, by the poor especially, than this. Hence, as the great event of the year, the medal for 1802 artistically perpetuates it with the legend:

MONETA . RESTITUTA.

After the restoration, the cares of Government were even more heavy, but equally guided by a wise and generous spirit. Let it be remembered how late, and how astounding, was the great commercial revolution of free trade amongst us. The old corn-laws, the sliding scale, the mighty League, the extorted repeal of those laws, through the joint agency of the elements and of popular agitation, are so recent, that the reflux wave of the great movement is not yet still, but

murmurs dully in quiet corners, where Conservative members feel themselves at home, amidst grumbling farmers, and occasionally breaks into a whisper in some eccentric parliamentary speech. But, even last year, great and enlightened states prohibited the exportation of corn and other sorts of food. In 1815, the Pope, while forbidding their exportation, not only permitted their free entry, but gave a premium on their introduction into the States, and a distinct one for their transmission into the provinces.

There were, however, more serious matters than these to occupy the thoughts of the sovereign and his ministry; and they were fully considered. Many religious houses and other establishments had been sold by the French government, and had even passed through several hands. On the 14th of August, 1816, all such properties as had not been materially altered, and which could thus again be restored to their original purposes, were demanded back; but the actual holders were all to be indemnified for their losses, and a commission *ad referendum* was appointed to examine individual claims, that they might be fully satisfied.

In order to distribute fairly the burthens of taxation, a new and complete survey and valuation of the entire property of cities and of



countries. This is matter of history. But the personal calamities of the Holy Pontiff, his admirable patience and exemplary virtues, had, no doubt, their share in enhancing the sympathy due on account of the cause for which he suffered. More than once was England ready to receive him on board her ships of war, and give him an asylum.

The journey of Consalvi to London has been mentioned, and with it the fact of his having conveyed letters from the Prince Regent to his Holiness. This mark of friendship was repeated when the Cavalier Canova, raised on the occasion to the title of Marquess of Ischia, returned to Rome, with the works of art restored from the Louvre. It is agreeable to relate, that the heavy expense of their removal from Paris to Rome was defrayed entirely by our Government ; and this act of graceful generosity was enhanced by the letter from the Prince, of which Canova was bearer, as he was of letters from Lord Castlereagh to the Pope, and to the Secretary of State.

When Lord Exmouth had succeeded in his gallant attack on Algiers, he too wrote letters to both. That to the Holy Father was couched in terms as respectful as a Catholic could have used. It is dated Algiers, August 31, 1816, from on

board the "Queen Charlotte." It informs the Pope of his success; declares that Christians' slavery is at an end for ever, and that he sends him 173 captives, subjects of his States. These, he hopes, will be a present acceptable to His Holiness, and will give him a title to the efficacy of his prayers.

It was this kind and grateful feeling towards England, which led to the restoration of the national college, that had existed so long in Rome. Cardinal Consalvi warmly took up its cause, and assumed to himself the duties, though he would not accept the title, of "Cardinal Protector" to the establishment. He assisted personally at the meetings of its superiors, attended to all its details. A volume lies before me, a thick quarto manuscript, in almost every page of which is a record of some kindness towards the Catholics of England. One instance only need be entered here.

The present church at Moorfields, which now serves as the pro-cathedral to the diocese of Westminster, was finished in 1820. It was considered then a spacious and handsome building. A perspective drawing of its interior was sent to Rome, and presented by the Rev. Dr. Gradwell to the Pope. The good Pius immediately said that he would send a token of his affec-

tionate interest in the work. The papal treasury and sacristy were very empty; but he ordered the most valuable object in church plate which he possessed to be prepared for a present. His attendants remarked that it was the most costly thing he had; and his reply was, "There is nothing too good for me to give the English Catholics." On his restoration, the Chapter of Mexico had sent him a massive gold chalice, richly set with emeralds, pearls, and diamonds. It was accompanied by cruets, bell, and dish, all of the finest gold. This was his intended gift, and he commissioned Dr. Gradwell to have an inscription prepared to be engraved upon it. On the 29th of April, he waited on His Holiness with two inscriptions. The Pope read them, and said that either would do, but that neither mentioned the consecration of the chalice by himself. He was answered that such an additional mark of kindness had not been presumed upon. The pontiff said it was his intention to give this further value to his gift; and it is recorded in the inscription on the chalice, which is used at Moorfields on the greater solemnities.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The inscription is as follows:—"Pius VII. Pont. Max. Templo Londini, in Moorfields, recens a Catholicis exstructo, a se consecratum libens donum misit, A.D.N. MDCCCXX. Pont. S. XXI."

In the MS. journal before me, in the same page, is the following

This chapter will be not unsuitably closed by the inscription which records, in the English College, the kindness of Pius and his minister in restoring that national establishment.

## MEMORIE

PII . VII . FONT . MAX .

QVOD . COLLEGIVM . ANGLORVM

A GREGORIO . XIII . P . M .

IN . ANTIQVO . EIVS . NATIONIS . ADVENARVM . HOSPITIO

PRIMITVS . CONSTITVTVM

VRBE . AVTEM . A . GALLIS . OCCVPATA

ANTE . AN . XX . DISSOLVTVM

ANNO . MDCCCXVIII . RESTITVERIT

EIDEMQVE . AD . VOTVM . NATIONIS . EIVSDEM

RECTOREM . DE . CLERO . IPSIVS . PRAEFECERIT

HERCVLE . CONSALVIO . S . E . R . CARD . COLLEGII . PATRONO

ANGLIAE . EPISCOPI . ET . CLERVS

GRATI . ANIMI . CAUSA

entry :—" May 1.— The King of England has written in Latin to the Pope, with his sign manual. The first instance of such a correspondence since our Revolution (1688). The Pope is pleased, and is answering it."

## CHAPTER IX.

## LITERATURE, SCIENCE, ART.

NEITHER of the foreign occupations, the republican or the imperial, lasted sufficiently long to interrupt that succession of men devoted to study which Italy, and especially Rome, has always kept up. Indeed, after the restoration, there yet survived veterans who had gathered their first laurels on the fields of a peaceful country, unconscious for generations of hostile invasion.

Such, for instance, was the antiquarian Fea, one of those men of the old school, like the Scaligers, the Vossii, or rather Grævius and Gronovius, who could bring to the illustration of any subject a heap of erudition from every imaginable source, from classics or Fathers, from medals, vases, bas-reliefs, or unheeded fragments of antique objects, hidden amidst the rubbish of museum magazines. He is perhaps best known in the literary world by his magnificent edition of Winkelmann, the notes to which are

not inferior in value to the text. Indeed, one might say that the two authors divide the qualities of the book: the unfortunate German, who was assassinated by his servant, bringing to it the taste and sagacity of the artistic antiquarian, and his Italian annotator the abundant, or even redundant, learning of the erudite but dry archæologist.

Day after day might one see him, sitting for hours in the same place, in the library of the Minerva, at the librarian's desk, poring to the end of life over old books still. And is it not always so? In youth we love new books, our own contemporaries, those that have our measure and that of the age, those who "catch the manners living as they rise." But as we grow old, we live backwards towards the past. We go willingly among those who in popularity are aged, or aging, like ourselves. They suited their era exactly, and were then liked by the young and thrown aside, with a shake of the head, by the mature. But now that the superficial gloss is worn away, that which dazzled, and that which offended, how racy and how charming are they not to us? Such are the memoirs, the letters, the journals, and the essays of former ages, their chronicles even, in their primeval quaintness. They may have repre-

sented, and no doubt did represent fierce parties, gross enmities, sharp reproof, the envious eye, the venoméd tooth, the wicked smile, the curled lip, or the lolling tongue. To us all the leer and jibe, and even playful malice, have softened down into harmless wit and gentle sprightliness.

Well, no matter, the old love to converse with the dead; and therefore it is not surprising that one should remember Fea with a parchment-bound book, folio or octavo, or perhaps a heap of many such before him. He was indeed an antiquarian of the old school, as has been remarked; and perhaps, had he been asked which method he preferred, the digging in the earth round ancient monuments, to discover their history and name, or the excavating them from old authors, and determining them by skilful combinations of otherwise unintelligible passages, he might have preferred the second method. His theories, based upon actual explorations, were certainly not happy, and his conjectures, though supported with ingenuity and erudition, were not verified by local searches. In this respect, Professor Nibby, partly his rival, though much his junior, was more successful.

The Abbate Fea was verily not a comely,

nor an elegant man, at least in his old age ; he had rather the appearance of a piece of antiquity, not the less valuable because yet coated with the dust of years, or a medal, still rich in its own oxidization. He was sharp and rough, and decisive in tone, as well as dogmatic in judgment. If one went up to him, rather timidly, at his usual post, to request him to decipher a medal at which one had been poking for hours, he would scarcely deign to look at it, but would tell you at once whose it was ; adding, perhaps for your consolation, that it was of no value.

A contrast to him in externals, was another priest, whose learning was as various, though of a totally different class ; the Abbate Francesco Cancellieri. I remember him coming to pay his annual Christmas visit to the rector of the College, an octogenarian at least, tall, thin, but erect, and still elastic ; clean and neat to faultlessness, with a courteous manner, and the smiling countenance that can only be seen in one who looks back serenely on many years well spent. He used to say, that he began to write at eighteen, and had continued till eighty ; and certainly there never was a more miscellaneous author. The peculiar subjects of which he treats, and even the strange combinations in their very



titles, are nothing, compared with the unlooked for matters that are jumbled and jostled together inside. Few would have thought of writing a volume on "the head physicians of the Popes ;" or on "the practice of kissing the Pope's foot antecedently to the embroidery of the cross on his shoe ;" or on "the three papal functions in the Vatican Church ;" or on "men of great memory, or who have lost their memories ;" or finally, "on the country houses of the Popes, and the bite of the tarantula spider." But the fact is, that under these titles are to be found stray waifs and *trouvailles* of erudition, which no one would think of looking for there. Hence his works must be read through, to ascertain what they really contain. No clue is given by the title, or any other usual guide, to the materials of his books.

I remember a most promising young German scholar, cut off before he had time to fulfil the expectations of his friends. This was Dr. Pappencordt, whose "History of the Vandals" had early gained a literary prize in his own country. His acquaintance with mediæval history was amazing ; he remembered the dates of the most insignificant events ; and would make excursions into the desolate border tracts in the mountains, between Rome and Naples, to visit the theatre of

the most puny action between pugnacious barons in Central Italy. I dwell with pleasure on his memory ; for many an interesting bit of information, which has not been without its use, did I collect from him, on topics of Italian history, whereon one did not find clever men in the country take much heed. He was still, as I have intimated, very young : and had all the amiable and candid worth which belongs to the youthful enthusiast. But before that period, as he informed me, he had gone through the whole of Baronius's Annals, extracting from them a list of every historical document referred to in that immense, and almost unrivalled compilation ; but had experienced the misfortune to which every accumulator of inky sheets is liable, the seeing just the last of them taken at the end of winter to light the stove, by that deadliest enemy of literary litter, a tidy housemaid. Well, this industrious young scholar told me, that he had for years been searching for a document which he knew must exist somewhere, but which he had not been able to find anywhere. It was this. The Council of Trent was transferred after the seventh session to Bologna, where the eighth and ninth sessions (merely formal ones) were celebrated. The ground alleged was the existence of contagious or epidemical disease in

Trent, which made it dangerous to the life of the prelates to meet there. This is distinctly stated in the decree of the eighth session, March 11, 1547. Of course, the adversaries of the Council gave another reason, and denied the reality of the one alleged. The German historian was desirous of finding the medical certificate or declaration alluded to in the Decree, and mentioned, but never given, by historians. At length, while plunging through a tangled jungle, the produce of Cancellieri's unchecked fertility, his work on the Papal *villeggiaturas* and the tarantula, he lit most opportunely on the very document, like a solitary flower in the wilderness. It was there given textually from the original.

It was thus, that he may be said to have verified the character which Niebuhr, one of the learned foreigners in Rome at the time of these recollections, gave to Cancellieri's writings; that "they contained some things that were important, many things that were useful, and everything that is superfluous." One of the most useful features of his writings is, that on whatever subject he treats, he gives you the fullest list of authors upon it compiled till his time. Thus, his work on memory, contains a catalogue of writers on artificial memory, and of inventors

of various systems of it, which would probably surprise most readers.<sup>1</sup>

Miserable as were the times that had just preceded our epoch, for all who had made the Church or her studies their choice, many were then engaged in the cultivation of sacred literature who have since distinguished themselves in it. But the men of the period belonged to the training of a former age. It could not interest the ordinary readers of these pages, to enumerate them, especially as few at that time had spirits, or occasion, to become authors in a science which was but little encouraged. Complete silence, however, might be interpreted as an admission that Rome was defective in what has always formed its special pursuit; and therefore we will be content with saying, that there were many men whose cultivation of sacred studies prepared the way for the solid

<sup>1</sup> Such an author may well be supposed to have got together, in the course of his long life, a most miscellaneous and extensive collection of tracts, pamphlets, and papers. This came into the hands of the Marchese Marini, editor of "Vitruvius" and "De Marchi," both on a magnificent scale. He also became possessor of the collection of Miscellanea formed by the celebrated antiquarian Enea Quirino Visconti, who preferred Paris to his native Rome. The two, with many additions, form a series of 300 volumes, or *cartons*, containing many things not easily to be found. They were included in the purchase of the magnificent Marini library, bought by the late Bishop Walsh, and given by him in perpetuity to the college of St. Mary's Oscott.

ecclesiastical learning, which now flourishes in Rome.

One man, celebrated throughout Europe, whose researches embraced every branch of learning sacred and profane, may be expected to find a brief notice here, did not the object of this work naturally assign him another place. Although Angelo Mai made his first appearance in Rome in 1819, and although the author well remembers the paragraph in the Roman paper which announced his arrival from Milan, and the subsequent one which proudly proclaimed his immortal discovery of Cicero "*De Republica*," yet it was not till a later period that he could acquire what he cherishes among his most valuable recollections, the kind and familiar intercourse enjoyed with this good and gifted man, not only in the shady alleys of the Pincian hill, but under other circumstances which brought them more closely together, and which were evidence of his kind and condescending disposition.

Before, however, leaving this portion of our desultory talk about literature, it may be permitted to say a few words upon a subject connected with it, and especially with its more sacred department. The pulpit is one of the best indexes of national taste in foreign literature. Indeed we can hardly except that of our own

country. Terse and nervous language, conveying original thought and solid learning, is a proof of a sterling literature having a hold on the national mind. When its poetry in England, or its inscriptions, as well, in Italy, were a tissue of quaintnesses, forced conceits, sports with words, extravagant hyperboles, and turgid language, the most admired orators of the day carried every such violation of good taste into the sanctuary; and no doubt they moved their sympathetic hearers to tears, as completely as they now do their occasional readers to laughter. Schiller has scarcely caricatured F. Abraham a S. Clara in his "Piccolomini" for Germany; Fray Gerundio professes to give only real examples for Spain; and I think Dr. Beattie gives a few gems, from Dr. Pitcairn and other grave divines north of the Tweed, of absurd conceits. The classical Tiraboschi will supply examples of this debasement of the current literature of Italy, during the reign of what is there known under the chronological term of "seicentismo." A Latin inscription of the reign of Urban VIII. could be dated, by reading three lines, as easily as by recognising the bees upon his shield. It is the same with the sonnets of the age. Language and thoughts fell together; the second pulled the first down to their own level; and they both

dragged themselves along their dull and weedy path. Three Jesuit writers alone escaped this general corruption, Bartoli, Pallavicini, and Segneri. Traces may be discovered in them, especially in the latter, of the *concetti* so universal in the age; but still they form a trine exception to a characteristic mark of the time, as honourable to the body to which they belonged on this account, as for the learning, piety, and ability which have made them standard authors in their various classes of ecclesiastical literature.

It would be easy to trace these analogies in bad taste still further into the arts. The "Barocco" in architecture, the "Berninesque" in sculpture, and "Mannerism" in painting. have clear relations, not only of time, but of character, with the literature to which we allude. It is quite possible that an improvement in either, or simultaneously in both, may take the form of a reaction, rather violent and intolerant at first. To a certain extent this has been the case in Italy. A foreigner perhaps has no right to judge; but there is no presumption in bearing witness to what only constitutes a fact, analogous to what has been observed in every other language. The only way to purge any tongue of a bad taste which has eaten into it, or of a swarm of unidiomatic or foreign words that have made it almost

a mongrel speech, is to return to a period antecedent to that of corruption, and to adopt a stern principle of excluding nearly every modern accession. The Germans have been happy in their efforts to create a multitude of new words which have superseded the modern bastard Gallo-German and other interpolations of their noble tongue. They have used boldly the Horatian expedient of a "*callida junctura*" to create a fresh, but perfectly national, vocabulary. This required the co-operation of writers, popular as well as learned, who enjoyed the confidence, and the acknowledged leadership, of the whole German race. For such a literary combination we have neither power nor will. But our own best writers, we feel, are those who have most naturally returned to tastes that preceded the vapid fluencies and morbid elegances of the ante-Georgian period, rich though it be; and have sought to win back some of the nerve and sinew of the time, when choice could only lie between the greater or the lesser preponderance of the classical or of the Saxon element.

In French it is essentially the same. One cannot read the modern poets, or even essayists, of the language, without observing the strong and successful effort to introduce what used to be denied to it, a distinct poetical language, employ-



ing words unused in the conversation or the writing of the drawingroom.

The Italian had a classical period to which he could return, a definite unalloyed standard of purity to which he might lead back his language. Not merely did one writer reign supreme there, but several others were near him, sufficiently varied in subjects and style to give breadth to the basis on which a regeneration could be grounded. Some indeed carried veneration, and consequent imitation, of Dante to extremes. But not only such writers as Petrarch and Boccaccio, poets or romancers, or the host of inferior novelists, impure in matter as pure in style, entered into the list of models for the revival of good taste ; but most religious and ascetic writings even, like the sweet "Fioretti" of St. Francis, the life and letters of St. Catherine, and the "Mirror of Penance" of Passavanti.

Any return to the standard of literary excellence of that period was, therefore, perfectly compatible with a corresponding improvement in the most religious and spiritual class of writings. A danger of extravagance, or even of mistake, might indeed alarm ; and examples are familiarly quoted of both, on the part of Father Cesari, the originator, in great measure, of the movement towards *purism*, as it was called. Objections of

this sort are childish ; no great change is effected without enthusiasm, and no enthusiasm can exist without exaggeration, and that of itself is mistake. The work has gone steadily on : and no one can compare the Italian literature of the present day with that of the beginning of the century, and not perceive the immeasurable gain. One Italian periodical alone, the “ *Civiltà cattolica* ” of Rome, contrasted with any published formerly, will prove the difference.

The influence of this change on the sacred eloquence of Italy, has been just what might have been expected. In some instances more essential requisites have been sacrificed to style ; “ the weightier things of the law ” disappear beneath the savoury seasoning of “ aniseed and cummin ; ” men’s ears are tickled by a tissue of elegant paragraphs, and applause obtained by exquisite phraseology, combined in harmonious periods. It would be unjust to say that this was all that lately attracted crowds to the preaching of the Avvocato Barberi, who in mature age exchanged the forensic gown for the cassock, and transferred his eloquence from the bar to the pulpit. No doubt there were ideas as well as phrases in his discourses ; and ideas that proceeded from a vigorous and a cultivated mind. But men went to hear him as they went to hear

an elegant musician, who charmed, but changed not, the listener ; as one whose sermons of " judgment " ruffled not the sinner, and put no sting into the wicked heart. Graceful elegance was the substitute for stirring eloquence.

It is a common opinion, that in Italy preaching is rather of a character approaching to ranting, than akin to that sober and guarded communication between clergyman and parishioners which takes place once a week in a country church. We shall not be far wrong if we place it, at various points, between the two. It has generally neither the ignorant violence of the one, nor the tame common-place of the other. Those who have been in Italy, and have frequented, with full comprehension of the language, the sermons delivered every Sunday in the principal churches of great cities, will acknowledge, whatever their religion at home, that nowhere have they listened to discourses containing more solid and useful matter, couched in more finished and yet simple language, or delivered in a more forcible, yet unexaggerated manner.

To say that similar addresses would not be heard in the poorer quarters of towns, or in country villages, would be only to assert, that Italian priests have too much good sense, not

to accommodate matter and manner to the characters and capacities of their audiences. Nevertheless it will be seen, that day after day crowds of poor will go to hear a preacher of eminence; for he would soon lose his high character, if he soared into regions whither the simple faithful could not follow him.

Foreigners, unfortunately, seldom trouble themselves about what does not come into the circle of fashionable ordinary occupation. Without, therefore, speaking of what would take an Englishman out of reasonable distance from the region honoured by his residence, let any one attend the Sunday afternoon lecture on Scripture at the Gesù; and we believe that he will hear as much plain, practical instruction on Holy Writ, simply delivered, as he is likely to gather from sermons by popular preachers of ultra-biblical exclusiveness. Such certainly were the discourses continued for years by the late holy and learned F. Zecchinelli, a man deeply versed in the sacred writings; and delivered with that eloquence which manifests itself in look and speech, backed by life and conduct. No one could ever have reproached him with preaching up a scriptural rule of virtuous life, and not following it.

But besides the solid matter which one may

often, indeed generally, hear in an Italian sermon, there is a music accompanying it which gives it a winning charm, unknown to countries beyond the Alps. The grace of delivery seems to be one of the fine arts; for it lingers in their company, where they love to reside. The first Sunday after arriving in Rome, our party was taken to the church of Araceli on the Capitol to hear a celebrated preacher deliver a sermon of his Advent course. Hours before the time, the entire area was in possession of a compact crowd, that reached from the altar-rails to the door, and filled every aisle and all available standing room. The preacher ascended the pulpit, simply dressed in his Franciscan habit, which left the throat bare, and by the ample folds of its sleeves added dignity to the majestic action of his arms. His figure was full, but his movements were easy and graceful. His countenance was calm, mild, unfurrowed as yet by age, but still not youthful: he seemed in the very prime of life, though he survived very few years. To one who could not, except very imperfectly, understand the language, and who had never heard a sermon in it, the observation of outward qualities and tokens was natural, and likely to make an indelible impression. Indeed, I remember no sermon as I do this, so far as the

“faithful eyes” go. And yet the ears had their treat too. The first, and merely unintelligible accents of that voice were music of themselves. It was a ringing tenor, of metallic brilliancy, so distinct and penetrating that every word could be caught by every listener in any nook of the vast church, yet flexible and varying, ranging from the keenest tone of reproach to the tenderest wail of pathos. But the movement and gesture that accompanied its accents were as accordant with them as the graceful action of the minstrel, calling forth a varied and thrilling music from the harp. Every look, every motion of head or body, every wave of the hand, and every poise of the arm was a commentary to the word that it accompanied. And all was flowing, graceful, and dignified. There was not a touch of acting about it, not an appearance of attempt to be striking.

Then, for the first time, I felt overawed by the stillness which only the pent-up breath of a multitude can produce, while some passage of unusual beauty and overpowering force makes the hearer suspend, as far as he can, the usual functions of life, that their energies may be concentrated on a single organ. And scarcely less grand is the relief which breaks forth, in a universal murmur, a single open breath from

each one swelling into a note, that conveys more applause, or at least approbation, than the clapping of twice as many hands.

Later, it was easier to feel, what the first day one could only wonder at. I remember the same preacher in the choir of St. Peter's, uttering one of those sublime passages, and lying prostrate in spirit, as the vision passed over it, scarcely daring to move, or even turn the eyes aside. He was reproving negligence in attending at the celebration of the divine mysteries; and imagined the priest, rapt into heaven, and ordered to offer the heavenly sacrifice on the altar of the Lamb there. He painted with glowing words the attitudes, the countenances, and the feelings of adoring spirits, while for only once assisting at what is, in the Church militant, a daily privilege.

Now if any one will turn to the printed sermons of Father Pacifico Deani, he may find the very sermons alluded to, and wonder that they can have been thus described. While far from pretending to make comparison between the peerless master-piece of ancient eloquence and the humble Franciscan's devout discourses, one may be allowed to answer the objection, in the same words by which Æschines enhanced his great and successful rival's merit: "What if you had heard him speak them?" This, no doubt, was great

part of the charm, greater to one who, till then, had been accustomed to bear only the stately monotony in which the simplest lessons are often conveyed, and the unimpassioned tameness with which the most touching scenes are described, or rather narrated, at home.<sup>1</sup>

At the period on which we are engaged, science was efficiently represented in Rome. Professors Conti and Calandrelli are well known in the annals of astronomy for the regularity and accuracy of their observations in the Roman observatory, annually published, and by other valuable contributions to mathematical science in its highest branches. They were inseparable companions, and most faithful friends. The first was still the professor whose lectures we attended ; the second, a good old man, had retired from public duties. Pius VII. encouraged first, then chartered and endowed, an academy or society, yet existing, for practical science, established by Professor Scarpellini, and having its seat in the Capitol. Dr. Morichini, besides being a most able physician,

<sup>1</sup> F. Pacifico, a peasant child, was heard by a religious, preaching to a group of poor children of his own age. It was found that, after hearing a sermon once, he was able to repeat it almost word for word. He was educated, and became one of the most eloquent preachers of his time. He used to dictate a sermon to a secretary, and then preach it without reading it over. This he only required if, after a lapse of years, he wished to repeat the discourse.



was the friend and often the co-labourer of Sir Humphry Davy, who made many experiments at the Sapienza in Rome, to which he was warmly attached. Dr. Morichini was the first who discovered, and applied, the magnetising power of the violet ray in the prism.

It would be easy to add a list of names of persons well versed in science who then lived and wrote, as Settele, Richebach, Vagnuzzi, and the numerous professors at the University; but names like those of the late F. Vico, and the living F. Sacchi, are still better known to scientific Europe, in proof that Rome is not behind other great cities in its scientific attainments.

The reign of Pius VII. was, in spite of its vicissitudes, most propitious for art. What has been said about language, may in some measure be extended to this. The condition to which it had sunk could only be remedied by the complete transfer of affection and principle, from it to a better, indeed a faultless, period. And what could that be but classical art, alone supreme in sculpture? There was in fact no other school. The early Christian, that of the Pisans, was itself a noble effort to revive the beauties of the heathen school, chastened by the feelings of a better religion; the strong development by Michelangelo was the burst of individual genius, not

to be imitated with impunity by any less than himself. The intermediate period presented neither models sufficient, nor principles distinct enough, to become the basis of a new system in glyptic art. To Canova undoubtedly belongs the praise of having revived, or raised from a low state of affectation, exaggeration, and meanness of conception, this simplest of artistic resources for exciting grand ideas of God's noblest earthly creation, in the mind of the being on whom He conferred that dignity. Canova's monument of Clement XIV. took the world of art by surprise; and his return to the simple beauty, the calm attitudes, the quiet folds, the breadth and majesty of ancient works, soon put him at the head of a European school. And if he has been surpassed in some things by his followers, for example, by the great Dane, Thorwaldsen, it must never be forgotten that no step in excellence, not even the last to perfection, is equal to the stride from grovelling degradation to healthy action and truthful principle; especially when this at once places him who makes it in a preeminence that becomes a standard for rival excellence. And such certainly was Canova's position.

But the same principles will not hold good in painting. Besides our having very little left to

show us how the ancients practised this branch of art, we have another period of our own, which imparts to us all the practical instruction we can possibly require. Instead of this a cold classical school sprung up in Europe, of which David was the type in France, and the Camuccinis in Italy ; which sought its subjects in an unclean mythology or a pagan heroism, and its forms in the movementless and rigidly accurate marbles of antique production. A raw unmellow colouring, over-bright and unblending, devoid of delicacy and tenderness, clothed the faultless design of the figures ; so that the cartoon was often more agreeable than the finished painting. There, however, you saw riders guiding their foaming steeds without a bridle, and soldiers dealing heavy blows at one another with invisible swords, of which they grasped tightly the bladeless pommel. And this was, because the ancients so sculptured cavaliers and combatants, from the difficulty of providing them with a floating rein, or a brandished sabre in so frail a material as marble. Why should not the eye have been as well left without an iris ? There is, indeed, in the Hospital of Santo Spirito, in Rome, a ward painted in fresco, with countless figures, all somehow made eyeless ; but this was from the caprice, or malice, not from the classicalism of the artist.

This last yet reigns too much in Italy, where has sprung, in the mean time, that beautiful German school, which at Munich, Cologne, Düsseldorf, and Berlin, has produced such lovely works, and which, still faithful to the land that gave it birth, is there not only blooming with sweet grace, but is gradually shedding its seed on the fertile ground around it, repaying in Christian beauty, the classical accuracy which fed its own root.

It must be acknowledged that such works in painting as were executed during the pontificate of Pius VII. in the library or museum, to commemorate its great events, are little worthy of their subject, or of Italian art.

The mention of these seats of learning and art suggests a few words. It is almost a matter of course, that every Pope adds to the treasures of the Vatican, both literary and artistic. In the earlier portion of his pontificate, Pius had already walked in his illustrious predecessors' footsteps. The Museo Pio-Clementino, the addition of his two immediate predecessors, seemed to leave him little hopes of surpassing it. The magnificence of its halls, the variety of its collections, and the beauty of many among its sculptures, combined the splendour of a palace with the richness of a gallery. The earlier contributions of our Pope

were simple but most valuable. The long corridors leading to the Vatican library were filled by him with secondary monuments, urns, cippi, sarcophagi, altars, busts, and statues, some of great price ; and the walls were lined with inscriptions, Christian on one side, and heathen on the other.

Nothing can be more becoming than this modest approach, at every step growing in interest and value, towards the clustered temples of that acropolis or capitol of art. You walk along an avenue, one side adorned by the stately and mature, or even decaying memorials of heathen dominion, the other by the young and growing, and vigorous monuments of early Christian culture. There they stand face to face, as if in hostile array, about to begin a battle long since fought and won. On the right may be read laudatory epitaphs of men whose families were conspicuous in republican Rome, long inscriptions descriptive of the victories, and commemorative of the titles, of Nerva or Trajan ; then dedications to deities, announcements of their feasts, or fairs in their honour ; and an endless variety of edicts, descriptions of property, sacred and domestic, and sepulchral monuments. The great business of a mighty empire still in glory, military, administrative, religious, and social, stands catalogued on

that wall. What can ever take its place ? And the outward form itself exhibits stability and high civilisation. These various records are inscribed with all the elegance of an accomplished stone-mason's chisel, in straight lines and in bold uncial letters ; with occasional ornaments or reliefs, that bespeak the sculptor ; on blocks or slabs of valuable marbles, with an elegance of phrase that forms the scholar's envy.

Opposite to these imperial monuments are arranged a multitude of irregular, broken fragments of marble, picked up apparently here and there, on which are scratched, or crookedly carved, in a rude latinity and inaccurate orthography, short and simple notes, not of living achievements, but of deaths and burials. There are no sounding titles, no boastful pretensions. This is to a "sweet" wife, that to "a most innocent" child, a third to "a well-deserving" friend. If the other side records victories, this only speaks of losses ; if that roars out war, this murmurs only soft peace ; if that adorns with military trophies, this illuminates with scourges and pincers : the one may perhaps surmount with the soaring eagle, the other crowns with the olive-bearing dove.

Here are the two antagonist races, speaking in their monuments, like the front lines of two

embattled armies, about to close in earnest and decisive battle: the strong one, that lived upon and over the earth, and thrust its rival beneath it, then slept secure like Jupiter above the buried Titans; and the weak and contemptible, that burrowed below, and dug its long and deep mines, and enrolled its deaths in them, almost under the palaces whence issued decrees for its extermination, and the amphitheatres to which it was dragged up from its caverns to fight with wild beasts. At length the mines were sprung, and heathenism tottered, fell, and crashed, like Dagon, on its own pavements. And, through the rents and fissures, basilicas started up from their concealment below, cast in moulds of sand, unseen, in those depths; altar and chancel, roof and pavement, baptistery and pontifical chair, up they rose in brick or marble, wood or bronze, what they had been in friable sandstone below. A new empire, new laws; a new civilisation, a new art; a new learning, a new morality, covered the space occupied by the monuments to which the inscriptions opposite belonged.

It was a mercy to Christianity, that Providence kept the destruction of the previous state out of its deliberation, and in Its own hands. To have kept up its monuments would have been impossible. What could Christians have done with

thermæ, amphitheatres, and their lewd representations? Yet to have destroyed them would have been called barbarous. So God “lifted up a sign to the nations afar off, and whistled to them from the ends of the earth, and they came with speed swiftly.”<sup>1</sup> “There came up water out of the north; they were as an overflowing torrent; and they covered the land, and all that was therein; the city, and the inhabitants thereof.”<sup>2</sup> The successive locust-swarms that rushed over Italy had no instinct to guide them but the barbarism that plunders what it covets, and destroys what it contemns. And even after this, when the monuments of paganism had been destroyed, He “hissed for the fly that was in the uttermost parts of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that was in the land of Assyria; and they came, and they rested in the torrents of the valleys, and in the holes of the rock.”<sup>3</sup> For the Saracen predatory incursions in the eighth century devastated the outlying Christian monuments, and caused the final spoliation of the catacombs.

The Church has kindly taken into her keeping the gathered fragments and ruins of both invasions, from north and from east; and here they are placed separate, but united, and in

<sup>1</sup> Isa. v. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Jer. xlvii. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Isa. vii. 18.



peace. Thus you are prepared for that still higher evidence, that the Church is neither Goth nor Vandal, which shines bright before you, in those precious halls and graceful cabinets, in which the successive Popes, whose names they bear, have worthily, or daintily, preserved the treasures and gems of ancient art.

After his restoration, Pius VII. continued his interrupted work. It is recorded of Fray Luis de Leon, the eminent Spanish professor, that, having been suspended from his chair for five years through hostile intrigue, and having been triumphantly restored, his lecture-room was crowded to hear, as it was hoped, his indignant vindication of himself. If they were disappointed, they were doubtless edified, when the audience heard him quietly commence by: "*Heri dicebamus*," "in yesterday's lesson we were saying:" and continue the subject of his last lecture. It was with just such serenity that the good Pontiff calmly resumed the works of his glorious reign, "*Ibi manum apposuit ubi opus desierat*." The gallery which more especially bears his name, and which crosses the great Belvedere court of the Vatican, is one of the most beautiful portions of the Museum. It seems indeed wonderful, how such a building could have been erected, richly decorated, and filled with master-pieces of art, in so

short a time. When first I remember it, it was still in the mason's hands, brick walls amidst a forest of scaffold poles ; yet the Pope lived to see it finished in all its beauty. The architect, if I remember right, was not so fortunate. He was young and promising, with the northern name of Stern. I can recollect going to see him, at Monte Compatri, in the Tusculan hills, when he was disfigured by a huge tumour on his shoulder, the consequence of a fall, which shortly carried him to an early grave.

To the library Pius made considerable additions, not only of manuscripts, but of many thousands of printed volumes. Among these was a magnificent collection of bibles, and biblical works. The Pantheon had long been to Rome, what Santa Croce was to Florence, and Westminster Abbey used once to be to us ; the mausoleum of great men. The busts of distinguished Italians were arranged round its walls, and gave a profane appearancé to the church. By order of the Sovereign Pontiff a new gallery was prepared in the Capitol, under the name of Prothotheca ; and in one night of 1820, the whole of the busts were removed from the Pantheon, and carried thither.

It is, however, one even greater glory of Pius's reign, that he commenced that series of excava-

tions round ancient monuments which have been continued till the present day, and have done more for solid antiquarian learning than any previous study. Former excavations had been carried on mainly to obtain works of art, and were filled up again as fast as made. But, in 1807, the Arch of Septimus Severus, which, as may be seen in Piranesi's prints (not here "the lying Piranesi," as Forsyth calls him), had been more than half buried in the ground, was cleared of all rubbish, and an open space left quite round it. An immense spur, too, was added to the Colosseum, to prevent a large portion of its outward wall falling. The excavations and restorations of ancient monuments were continued by the French authorities under the Empire, and often with a bolder hand, for churches were destroyed or desecrated to discover or restore heathen edifices.<sup>1</sup> But after the restoration the

<sup>1</sup> I remember reading in Dr. Heber's "Journal," that an Armenian priest had called upon him, strong and powerful, and with a stentorian voice, to ask a contribution towards the repairing of the church belonging to his nation and order in Rome, Santa Maria Egiziaca, anciently the temple of *Fortuna Virilis*. The Anglican prelate refused him, because he said he had never heard that the French damaged ancient monuments, so he did not believe his story. The fact was, the Armenian and the Englishman looked at the thing from opposite points. The former considered the destruction of modern additions, and restitution of his church to heathen forms, a spoliation and injury: the latter considered it a benefit, probably. He was right in supposing that the French

work was resumed with greater vigour. Archæologists were wonderfully disappointed, when on excavating round a column in the centre of the Forum, which had been the very pivot of systems, it displayed on its pedestal an inscription of Phocas, a monarch totally out of the pale of classical society. Besides, however, other interesting restorations, that of the arch of Titus reflects greatest credit on the commission appointed by Pius, for the preservation of ancient edifices. This, not only beautiful, but precious monument had been made the nucleus of a hideous castellated fort, by the Frangipani family. Its masonry, however, embraced and held together, as well as crushed, the marble arch ; so that on freeing it from its rude buttresses, there was fear of its collapsing, and it had first to be well bound together by props and bracing beams, a process in which Roman architects are unrivalled. It was in this condition that I first remember the arch of Titus. The seven-branch candlestick, the table, trumpets, and other spoils

would not destroy a pagan temple ; but not, in believing that they would spare a church. As a singular coincidence I may add that, just after reading this passage when first published, I heard a very loud voice in my ante-room, as Dr. Heber said he had heard one in his. It struck me it might be the very Armenian, and so it was. He was astonished and amused at finding himself examined about his interview at Calcutta. He confirmed the facts ; but thought the Bishop had treated him very shabbily.

abetting of brigandism was death, summarily inflicted. To be found with a small provision of food, was capitally punished in a shepherd who guarded a flock in the solitudes of the mountains. Hence, boys have been executed, with men that dragged them within the snares of the law, who, those that accompanied them to the scaffold have assured the writer, were innocent as infants of the crime of highway robbery. And hence, too, the poor shepherds were often in a fearful dilemma: if they saw the banditti, and did not denounce them, they suffered as abettors and accomplices; if they set the patrol on their track, they ran the risk of assassination. Sometimes a more cruel expedient was adopted. Many of that time will remember a poor peasant boy, who used to beg alms in Rome, whose tongue had been barbarously cut out by the roots, that he might not be able to betray to the police the passage of a robber band.

If the intense severity of the French laws, and if the unceasing pursuit of well disciplined troops, could not put down the peculiar form of robbery known in Italian by the terms of "*crassazione*" and "*assassinio*," and yet the government that employed these means unsuccessfully has never been taxed with feebleness, why should the one which immediately succeeded it be accused of

that defect? Surely the causes which made brigandage indomitable before, could not have ceased or diminished after the restoration of the pontifical government. The pressure of a military rule, which did not even affect to have anything paternal about it, was removed; and the effective army which had garrisoned all the country was withdrawn. It was only to be expected that the lawless spirit of the forest and the crag would acquire hardihood and power. It was not, in fact, till both police and soldiery had been thoroughly reorganised, that the evil was, through them, completely put down. This was only in the following pontificate.

The struggle, under such varied circumstances, between society and lawlessness, and the return of the latter to open war, after it has been repeatedly and effectually suppressed, are evidences of causes peculiar to the country, the absence of which forms security elsewhere. These will be both physical and moral. A mountainous country, for instance, will encourage a character of crime different from what will flourish in one like ours. A ridge of high mountains, almost inaccessible in parts, traversed only through deep and narrow ravines, commanded by overhanging cliffs, with one state at its feet on one side and another on the other,

forms a sort of "no man's land," the chosen abode of the outlaw. If a small knot is once formed there by a daring chief, who may possibly be a volunteer, having a dash of false romance in his character, and loving a mischievous vagabond life in preference to one of honest toil, it soon swells into a band, by the successive adhesions of escaped or liberated convicts, runaways from pursuing justice, or of mere idle scapegraces, who gradually inure themselves to deeds of blood, and become elated to something of military feeling by the terror which they inspire. Then they contrive, like Dick Turpin and others of our celebrated highwaymen, to mingle with their acts of daring some instances of generous gallantry, or polite forbearance, or even charitable kindness, which gain them sympathy among neighbours, and a character of knight-errantry among tourists. All this is bad enough, for it gives to their combats with the representatives of order a colour of chivalrous warfare, instead of the darker hue of a felon's struggle with the ministers of justice.

But worse still are the obstacles to success against them, from their favoured position. With timely warnings from secret sharers in their booty, or depraved allies, they hear, or used to hear, in time, of the approach of any

armed force against them; their own scouts, from "coigns of vantage" on the cornice of a rocky battlement, or from tree-tops, gave notice of immediate approach of danger. Surprise was thus almost impossible; and a scrambling attack through ravines, up rugged crags, and amidst tangled brushwood, had, to regular troops from the plain, all the disadvantages and perils of a guerilla combat, without its dignity. It cannot be denied that the conduct of the soldiery was intrepid and worthy of a better battle-field; but often when they had forced the position of the robber band, this sprung over the boundary line of another state, and there defied its baffled pursuers. This was something like the security in London, not very long ago, of delinquents and *gamins*, if they could get through Temple Bar, and thence take a serene view of the white-badged pursuivant, who stood foiled on the other side. In both cases, it was not till the convention was made between Rome and Westminster of the one side, and Naples and the City of the other side, that the police of the one might pass the boundaries of the other in pursuit of lawful game, that the robbers began to have the worst of it. The agreement between the two Italian powers took place in 1818; but proved insufficient. What was necessary and was resorted to



later was contemporary cooperation from both sides, a sort of tiger-hunt, in which the whole jungle is netted round and the quarry hemmed in, so that no pursuit is necessary because no flight is possible.

If the reader wishes to refresh his memory on the exploits of the banditti of that period, and recall their practices and mode of life, he has only to turn to Washington Irving's "Tales of a Traveller," where, in the third part, he gives "The Painter's Adventure" among his robber stories. In his preface he says that "the Adventure of the Young Painter among the banditti is taken almost entirely from an authentic narrative in manuscript." True: and astonished and disappointed was the poor French artist, when he found that the manuscript which he used to lend freely to his friends had been translated and published without his permission or knowledge by M. Wassinton, as he called his literary pirate. The writer had read it as a work of fiction by the amusing American tourist, for who believes the account in prefaces, of manuscripts, whether found in a *Cura's* leather trunk, or "Old Mortality's wallet," or "Master Humphrey's clock," or nowhere in particular? There was a contradiction, indeed, in calling that the adventure of a *young* painter, in which the

author attributed his coolness and serenity among the robbers, to his having been "schooled to hardship during the late revolutions," that is, at the end of the last century. This might indeed easily be passed over; but it was too true for M. Chatillon, the artist, that he had passed into the stage of "the lean and slippered pantaloon," when he was taken, as he describes, from the Villa Ruffinella, in 1818, by brigands, in mistake for its owner, Prince Lucien Bonaparte. The band had seized the chaplain, as he strolled in the neighbouring woods before dinner, and detained him till dusk, when they compelled him to be their guide to the house.

M. Chatillon lent his manuscript, among other neighbours, to us of the English College, and I believe we were the first to discover and inform him, that it was already published in English, with such alterations as made the account apocryphal; but with such a charm as would deprive the original, if printed, of all chance of success. A few years ago, after his adventure, M. Chatillon became an inmate of Lord Shrewsbury's family, where he painted many portraits of friends, likenesses, but not pictures: and the reader of that melancholy book of the day, "the Catalogue of Alton Towers," will find the name of "the young painter," M. Chatillon,

appended as the label to some very moderate works of art.

Washington Irving alludes to the carrying off of what he calls "the school of Terracina." It was in fact the episcopal seminary, situated outside the city, that was invaded one night, and all its inmates were carried away, — superiors, prefects, scholars and servants. On the road they were intrepidly attacked by a single dragoon, named I think Ercoli, or Ercolani, who lost his life in the unequal contest. But it enabled some to escape and give the alarm. Others got away; the feeble were dismissed; till at last a few boys of the best families in the neighbourhood were alone retained in the mountain fastnesses. Letters were sent to their families, demanding sums of money for their ransom; the demand was complied with. The scouts of the robbers saw the bearers of it winding up the rocky path, mistook them for soldiers, and gave the alarm to the troop, saying they were betrayed. When the relations of the captives reached the summit, they found two or three innocent children strapped to trees, with their throats cut, and dead. The survivors were brought to Rome, to tell their sad tale to the good and tender-hearted Pius, and well the writer remembers seeing the poor

boys still under the influence of their terror. They were retained at Rome.

But the recollections of that period furnish another event, which, earlier than this, brought nearer home the anxieties of country life, even when passed in community. It must have occurred in 1820. The English College possesses a country-house, deliciously situated in the village of Monte Porzio. Like most villages in the Tusculan territory, this crowns a knoll, which in this instance looks as if it had been kneaded up from the valleys beneath it, so round, so shapely, so richly bosoming does it swell upwards; and so luxuriously clothed is it with the three gifts whereby "men are multiplied,"<sup>1</sup> that the village and its church seem not to sit on a rocky summit, but to be half sunk into the lap of the olive, the vine, and the waving corn, that reach the very houses. While the entrance and front of this villa are upon the regular streets of the little town, the garden side stands upon the very verge of the hill-top; and the view, after plunging at once to the depths of the valley, along which runs a shady road, rises up a gentle acclivity, vine and olive clad, above which is clasped a belt of stately

<sup>1</sup> Ps. iv. 8.

chestnuts, the bread-tree of the Italian peasant, and thence springs a round craggy mound, looking stern and defiant like what it was — the citadel of Tusculum. Upon its rocky front the English students have planted a huge cross.

Such is the view which presents itself immediately opposite to the spectator, if leaning over the low parapet of the English garden. The beauties to right and to left belong not to our present matter. Well, just where the vineyards touch the woods, as if to adorn both, there lies nestling what you would take to be a very neat and regular village. A row of houses, equidistant and symmetrical, united by a continuous dwarf wall, and a church with its towers in the midst, all of dazzling whiteness, offer no other suggestion. The sight certainly would deceive one; but not so the ears. There is a bell that knows no sleeping. The peasant hears it as he rises at day-break to proceed to his early toil, the vine-dresser may direct every pause for refreshment by its unfailing regularity through the day; the horseman returning home at evening uncovers himself as it rings forth the "Ave;" and the muleteer singing on the first of his string of mules, carrying wine to Rome, at midnight is glad to catch its solemn

peal as it mingles with the tinkle of his own drowsy bells. Such an unceasing call to prayer and praise can only be answered, not by monks nor by friars, but by anchorites.

And to such does this sweet abode belong. A nearer approach does not belie the distant aspect. It is as neat, as regular, as clean, and as tranquil as it looks. It is truly a village divided by streets, in each of which are rows of houses exactly symmetrical. A small sitting-room, a sleeping cell, a chapel completely fitted up, in case of illness, and a wood and lumber-room compose the cottage. This is approached by a garden, which the occupant tills, but only for flowers, assisted by his own fountain abundantly supplied. While singing None in choir, the day's only meal is deposited in a little locker within the door of the cell, for each one's solitary refecton. On a few great festivals they dine together; but not even the Pope, at his frequent visits, has meat placed before him. Everything, as has been said, is scrupulously clean. The houses inside and out, the well-furnished library, the strangers' apartments (for hospitality is freely given), and still more the church, are faultless in this respect. And so are the venerable men who stand in choir, and whose noble voices sustain the church's magnificent

psalmody, with unwavering slowness of intonation. They are clad in white from head to foot; their thick woollen drapery falling in large folds; and the shaven head, but flowing beard, the calm features, the cast down eyes, and often venerable aspect, make every one a picture, as solemn as Zurbaran ever painted, but without the sternness which he sometimes imparts to his recluses. They pass out of the church, to return home, all silent and unnoticing; but the guest-master will tell you who they are. I remember but a few. This is a native of Turin, who was a general in Napoleon's army, fought many battles, and has hung up his sword beside the altar, to take down in its place the sword of the Spirit, and fight the good fight within. The next is an eminent musician, who has discovered the hollowness of human applause, and has unstrung his earthly harp, and taken up "the lyre of the Levite," to join his strains to those of angels. Another comes "curved like a bridge's arch," as Dante says, and leaning on a younger arm, as he totters forward, one whose years are ninety, of which seventy have been spent in seclusion, except a few of dispersion, but in peace: for he refuses any relaxation from his duties. Then follows a fourth, belonging to one of the noblest Roman

families, who yet prefers his cottage and his lentil to the palace and the banquet.

Such was the Camaldoli, and such were its inmates, when a robber chief determined to carry them off into the mountains. The gardens, woods, and fields of the hermit-village were all enclosed with a high wall, except where the gardens looked into the valley which separated it from Monte Porzio. Over one of these walls, intended for seclusion not for defence, the wolf clomb into the peaceful fold. One by one the unsuspecting inmates were aroused from their slumber to unholy Matins, and soon found themselves assembled in front of the church, surrounded by a large band of ruffians, armed to the teeth, muttering curses and blasphemies to smother their remorse. It was the policy of these wretches to leave not one behind who might betray their deed, and all were commanded to march out of the gate, and take the steep path towards Tusculum.

Remonstrance seemed vain ; but there was one sturdy lad, a farm-servant, not in the habit, who might have escaped, but would not. He had been there from boyhood, and loved the good hermits as his parents. He boldly argued with the marauders ; he checked and reproved them ; he insisted on the old, old men, and the infirm being left behind ; he made such hasty prepara-



tions of food as time permitted ; he soothed and encouraged the more timid, and went forth with them. On the journey, he was a hand to the weak, and a foot to the weary ; and feared not to expostulate with the freebooters.

Next morning, the early bell was silent ; it was the clock of the neighbourhood, so the silence was ominous and inconvenient. Hour went by after hour ; was there no chaunt, no oblation, no sacred duty at Camaldoli ? One may easily imagine the horror and consternation spread on every side, as the news travelled round, of the sacrilegious abduction of these unoffending, most respected, and most charitable men ; from whose gate no poor man was ever known to depart unrelieved. The history was related by the two or three left, through necessity, behind, and those who gradually escaped during the several days' march, or were allowed to return, as obstacles to the rapid movements soon required.

A large ransom was demanded for the few retained as hostages. It was the Government that was expected to pay it. A strong detachment of soldiers was sent instead. It overtook the brigands unprepared ; volleys were fired on both sides, and in the affray all the religious escaped except one. A musket ball had broken his thigh, and he lay helpless on the ground. But

the robbers were worsted, and he was saved. He belonged to the noble family of Altemps, whose palace, opposite to the church of Sant' Apollinare, was designed or decorated by Baldassare Peruzzi, and contains an apartment intact since it was occupied by St. Charles Borromeo. To this family residence he was conveyed, and there was attended for a long time, till at length cured. He was offered leave to retire from the monastic state, and remain as a priest in the world ; but he declined, and returned, though to another Camaldoli.

To the sight and to the ears, our Tusculan hermitage underwent a change. The fold required better guarding. The low walls between the gardens on our side, were built up to a formidable height, and slashed with rows of loopholes, so as to be defensible by the fire-arms of secular servants. The beautiful prospect of the valley, and the campagna beyond, was shut up to the tenants of the border cottages ; the square bit of the heavens over their gardens was all now left them. While we could see this change we could hear another. The deep bay of enormous and fierce ban-dogs echoed through the night, more unceasing than the bell. They were kept chained up all day ; at night they were let loose, and woe to any one who should

about?" A gasping "No," was the necessary answer. A pause of a few moments ensued. "Speak civilly to them," some one said, much in the way that Morton advised: "Speak them fair, sirs; speak them fair," when treating with Claverhouse's dragoons. But it was unnecessary. The pause was broken by the captain, saying civilly enough "Buon giorno," and leading off his troop. The step from the sublime of terror to the ridiculous of courage was instantaneous. Of course no one had been frightened, and nobody had taken them for robbers. They were probably the patrol from some neighbouring village; for each was obliged to arm its youth, and scour the neighbouring woods. However, one had the opportunity of experiencing the feelings incident on falling among robbers with real fire-arms and imaginary fierce looks.

If this topic has been made prominent among the recollections of a memorable period, it is to show the desire to speak impartially, and not conceal blots. That immense energy was displayed by the Government to efface them, and great sacrifices were made, no one who recollects the period can fail to remember. Military law reigned in the infested districts, to this extent, that the principal banditti were condemned to death as outlaws, and their sentence published

with descriptions of their persons: so that nothing more was required, when they were taken, than to identify their persons, and proceed to execution of the sentence. This was frequently done; and prices set upon their heads secured them to justice, if they descended from their haunts. It was proposed even to remove the inhabitants of districts that appeared incurable. Impunity was offered to such as delivered themselves up, on conditions somewhat analogous to our tickets of leave; and men used to be pointed out in Rome who had once been bandits, but were then leading a peaceful and industrious life. But there was evidently a moral obstacle to the eradication of this dreadful system of outlaw life. It becomes habitual to families and to tracts of country; where its horrors, its cruelties, and its wickedness are almost forgotten in the reckless and dashing exploits, the sure and enormous gains, and the very hair-breadth escapes that attend it. Hot blood easily leads to offence against the person; and one such crime drives its author to seek impunity, by war against the society that would justly punish him.

Let us, however, be always just. This great curse of Italy is impossible with us: we have no chains of Apennines, no rocky fastnesses, no mountain forests. But surely there have been

lately here sufficient crimes, dark and cold, reaching to shedding of blood and to the heedless ruin of thousands, which may be reduced to classes, and are traceable to social and local diseases from which Italy is exempt.

One further remark. Within these few years a system somewhat similar to that already detailed has revived; but more in the northern provinces. Again it is the fruit of a disturbance of public order, by revolution instead of by war. Again its seat is a border district, where the mountain boundary line is traced between Tuscany and the Papal States. And again this consequence of an abnormal condition is imputed to the normal; the legitimate sovereign is held responsible for the evils resulting from rebellion against him; and they who write to stimulate revolution, use as an argument in its favour, the necessity of repressing a mischief which revolution has engendered.

## CHAPTER XI.

## CLOSE OF PIUS THE SEVENTH'S PONTIFICATE.

THE venerable Pope had nearly reached the years of Peter, which none of his successors has yet attained; though sincere is the hope in the hearts of many of us, that the charm may be broken by the ninth Pius. Twenty-four years is the term thus assigned, as the bourn which none may hope to pass, and Pius VII. had happily advanced far into his twenty-third. The sixth of July was the fourteenth anniversary of his seizure in the Quirinal palace by General Radet. On that day, in the year 1823, in the same place, the aged Pontiff, about six in the evening, being alone, rose from his chair, and leaning with one hand on the bureau before it, sought with the other a cord balustrade which went round his room. He missed it; his foot slipped, and he fell. He cried for help; his attendants rushed in and laid him on his bed. He complained of acute pain in his left side, and as soon as surgical aid was procured it was

discovered that the neck of the femur was fractured—the very accident which has so lately befallen the veteran Radetzky.

For eight days the Pope was kept in ignorance of the gravity of his condition. When informed of it, he received the news with the same serenity and fortitude as had distinguished him in the vicissitudes of his life. He lingered for six weeks, the object of affectionate solicitude to all Rome. A person intimately connected with our college was in the Pope's household, and brought us daily information of every variation in his health. It was while in this state of anxiety, that all Rome was startled one morning by news so melancholy, and so naturally connected with the august patient, that in ancient times it would have been considered a portent, beyond statues sweating blood in the Forum, or victims speaking in the temples. It was rumoured that the great basilica of St. Paul's beyond the walls was burned down, and was already only a heap of smoking ruins.

It was too true, though it seemed hard to conceive how it was possible. The walls were of massive bricks, the pavement a patchwork of ancient inscribed marbles, the pillars of matchless Phrygian marble in the central, and of inferior marble in the lateral aisles, for it was a

five-aisled church. There were no flues or fires at any time, let alone the dog-days. Like Achilles, these old churches have their one vulnerable point, though its situation is reversed. The open cedar roof, sodden dry, and scorched to cinder, through ages of exposure, under a scanty tiling, to a burning sun, forms an unresisting prey to the destructive wantonness of a single spark. It was the usual story; plumbers had been working on that roof, and had left a pan of coals upon one of the beams. Every sort of rumour was, however, started and believed. It was confidently reported to be the work of incendiaries, and part of an atrocious plan to destroy the sacred monuments of Rome.

It was not till the afternoon that either the heat of the season or the occupations of the day permitted one to go far beyond the gates, though the sad news had penetrated into every nook of the city at sunrise. Melancholy indeed was the scene. The tottering external walls were all that was permitted to be seen, even from a respectful distance; for it was impossible to know how long they would stand. A clear space was therefore kept around, in which the skilful and intrepid fire-brigade — an admirably organised body — were using all their appliances to prevent the flames breaking out from the smoul-



dering ruins. There, among others, was the enthusiastic *Avvocato Fea*, almost frantic with grief. He was not merely an antiquarian in sculptures and inscriptions, he was deeply versed in ecclesiastical history, and loved most dearly its monuments. *St. Paul's* was one of the most venerable, and most precious of these. The very abandonment of the huge pile, standing in solitary grandeur on the banks of the *Tyber*, was one source of its value. While it had been kept in perfect repair, little or nothing had been done to modernise it and alter its primitive form and ornaments, excepting the later addition of some modern chapels above the transept; it stood naked and almost rude, but unencumbered with the lumpish and tasteless plaster encasement of the old basilica in a modern *Berninesque* church, which had disfigured the *Lateran cathedral* under the pretence of supporting it. It remained genuine, though bare, as *St. Apollinaris* in *Classe* at *Ravenna*, the city eminently of unspoiled basilicas. No chapels, altars, or mural monuments softened the severity of its outlines; only the series of papal portraits, running round the upper line of the walls redeemed this sternness. But the unbroken files of columns, along each side, carried the eye forward to the great central object, the altar and its "Confession;" while

the secondary rows of pillars running behind the principal ones, gave depth and shadow, mass and solidity, to back up the noble avenue along which one glanced. Among the constant and bewildered cries of Fea was: "Save the triumphal arch!" He made light now apparently of the rest. The term is applied to the great arch, which, supported on two massive pillars, closes the nave, or rather separates it from the transept and apse beyond. Above this arch rises a wall, clothed in mosaic, so happily revived and perfected in the Theodosian period. The triumphal arch of St. Paul's still towered nobly among the ruins, almost unscathed, as did the Gothic ciborium or marble canopy over the altar. On the face of the arch remained the majestic figure of our Lord in glory, and round it a metrical inscription, in which the Empress Galla Placidia recounted how, assisted by the great Pontiff Leo, she had finished the decorations of the church built by preceding emperors.

This mosaic was, in some sort, the very title-deed of the modern church, its evidence of identity with the imperial basilica. To preserve it just where it had stood for 1400 years would be almost to annul the effects of the conflagration: it would make the new edifice a continuation of the old. This was attended to. One

of the first steps taken was carefully to remove all that remained of the ancient mosaic, by the skilful hands of the Vatican workmen in that exquisite art ; and one of the last was to restore it to its place over the rebuilt arch.

To return, not a word was spoken to the sick Pontiff on this dreadful calamity. At St. Paul's he had lived as a quiet monk, engaged in study and in teaching, and he loved the place with the force of an early attachment. It would have added a mental pang to his bodily sufferings, to learn the total destruction of that venerable sanctuary, in which he had drawn down, by prayer, the blessings of heaven on his youthful labour.

In this happy ignorance the revered patient lingered on. To reunite the fractured bone, at his age, was beyond the power of surgery ; his feebleness increased, and he seemed to be slowly sinking ; when, on the 16th of August, more active symptoms supervened, especially delirium. On the following day, the Holy Pontiff expressed his desire to receive the Viaticum and it was administered to him by Cardinal Bertazzoli. Thus strengthened with the Bread of Angels, he awaited calmly his end. On the nineteenth he received Extreme Unction, and orders were sent to all the churches to recite in every Mass, the

prayer "for the Pontiff at the point of death." While it was being said all through Rome, on the following morning, the venerable man closed his glorious pontificate, and fell asleep in the Lord.

Providence had given him in the latter years of his pontificate many soothing and cheering compensations. In 1819 the Emperor and Empress of Austria, with their daughter, visited Rome, attended by a numerous and brilliant suite. It was not an *incognito* affair: they came in their own imperial character, and right imperially were they received and treated. Without disturbing the Pope or his court, a splendid suite of apartments was prepared for the imperial party in the Quirinal Palace, and furnished in a style which strongly contrasted with the severity of pontifical dwellings. Among the recollections of the period, there rise, distinct and vivid, the public *fêtes* given in honour of these illustrious guests. The King of Prussia visited Rome in 1822 in a more private manner, and afforded us an opportunity of seeing the Nestor of science, Humboldt. But in Rome, at that time, one became familiar with royal lineaments. The King of Naples visited it in 1821. King Charles IV. of Spain and his Queen had chosen Rome for their abode: in 1819 he went to Naples, to

recruit his health, and there died, while she remained at home, sickened too and died. Neither ever learnt any news, on this side of the grave, of the other's illness or death. Charles Emanuel IV. of Savoy had also retired to Rome, old and blind. I can well remember seeing him kneeling before the altar of Santa Maria Maggiore on Christmas Day, feeble and supported by two attendants. This was on my first Christmas in Rome: he died the following year. Our own banished Queen sought refuge there for a time<sup>1</sup>; and it must have been a consolation to the meek and unresentful Pius to see his capital afford a shelter to the proscribed family of the Emperor from whom he had so much suffered. They were allowed to have their palaces, their estates, their titles, and their position, not only unmolested, but fully recognised. And no one surely lived more respected, or died more regretted than the Princess Lætitia, the Emperor's honoured mother. This is truly a noble prerogative of Rome, to be the neutral territory on

<sup>1</sup> While there, a speech is attributed to her, which even those who will not consider it irreverent, will think undignified. She there heard that her name had been struck out of the prayers in the national liturgy, and remarked: "They have prayed a long time for me as Princess of Wales, and I am no better for it; perhaps now that they have given up praying for me, I may improve." — *MS. Journal*.

which the representatives of rival and even hostile royal houses may meet in peace, and with dignity; a place where enmities are forgotten, and injuries buried in oblivion.

And, in the same manner, one who resides at Rome may hope to see many men celebrated for their genius or their industry, in every department of literature and science, as well as art. Several of these have been mentioned, to whom others might be added, either residents in Rome, or passing visitors of its treasures.

But far beyond all these extraneous glories, which shed an ennobling splendour round the old age and waning pontificate of Pius VII. was the steady and unvarying love and veneration of his subjects. Not a murmur jarred upon his ear, among the benedictions daily wished him, and returned by him with fatherly tenderness to all. One may doubt if there be an instance in history, where the judgment of posterity is less likely to reverse the verdict of contemporaries.



Part the Second.

LEO THE TWELFTH.





# LEO THE TWELFTH.

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## CHAPTER I.

### HIS ELECTION.

THE interval between the close of one pontificate and the commencement of another is a period of some excitement, and necessarily of much anxiety. I remember being at Paris when Louis XVIII. died, and Charles X. succeeded to him. Chateaubriand published a pamphlet with the title, "Le Roi est mort, vive le Roi." There is no interregnum in successive monarchy: and that title to a book consists of words uttered by some marshal or herald, at the close of the royal funeral, as he first points with his bâton into the vault, and then raises it into the air.

But in elective monarchy, and in the only one surviving in Europe, there is of course a space of provisional arrangements, foreseen and pre-disposed. Time is required for the electors to assemble, from distant provinces, or even foreign countries; and this is occupied in paying the

last tribute of respect and affection to the departed Pontiff. His body is embalmed, clothed in the robes of his office, of the penitential colour, and laid on a couch of state within one of the chapels in St. Peter's, so that the faithful may not only see it, but kiss its feet. This last act of reverence the writer well recollects performing, to the mortal remains of the immortal Pius.

These preliminaries occupy three days: during which rises, as if by magic, or from the crypts below, an immense catafalque, a colossal architectural structure, which fills the nave of that basilica, illustrated by inscriptions, and adorned by statuary. Before this huge monument, for nine days, funeral rites are performed, closed by a funeral oration. The body of the last Pope has a uniform resting-place in St. Peter's. A plain sarcophagus, of marbled stucco, will be there seen, though hardly noticed, by the traveller, over a door beside the choir, on which is simply painted the title of the latest Pontiff. On the death of his successor it is broken down at the top, the coffin is removed to the under-church, and that of the new claimant for repose is substituted for it. This change takes place late in the evening, and is considered private. I cannot recollect whether it was on this or on a

subsequent occasion that I witnessed it, with my college companions.

In the afternoon of the last day of the novendiali, as they are called, the cardinals assemble in a church near the Quirinal palace, and walk thence in procession, accompanied by their conclavisti, a secretary, a chaplain, and a servant or two, to the great gate of that royal residence, in which one will remain as master and supreme lord. Of course the hill is crowded by persons, lining the avenue kept open for the procession. Cardinals never before seen by them, or not for many years, pass before them; eager eyes scan and measure them, and try to conjecture, from fancied omens in eye, or figure, or expression, who will be shortly the sovereign of their fair city; and, what is much more, the Head of the Catholic Church, from the rising to the setting sun. They all enter equal over the threshold of that gate: they share together the supreme rule, temporal and spiritual: there is still embosomed in them all, the voice yet silent, that will soon sound, from one tongue, over all the world, and the dormant germ of that authority which will soon again be concentrated in one man alone. To-day they are all equal; perhaps to-morrow one will sit enthroned, and all the rest will kiss his feet; one will be sovereign, the others his

subjects ; one the shepherd, and the others his flock.

This is a singular and a deeply interesting moment, a scene not easily forgotten. There pass before us men of striking figure, and of regal aspect. There is the great statesman of whom we have spoken, somewhat bowed by grief and infirmity, yet still retaining his brilliant gaze. There is the courteous, yet intrepid, Pacca ; tall and erect, with a bland look that covers a sterling and high-principled heart : there is the truly venerable and saintly De Gregorio, lately a prisoner for his fidelity, with snow-white head, and less firm step than his companion : Galeffi, less intellectual in features, but with a calm genial look that makes him a general favourite : Opizzoni already, and till lately, Archbishop of Bologna, who had boldly asserted the claims of papal, over those of imperial, authority to his counsels, in a manner that had gained him imprisonment ; beloved and venerated by his flock, and admired at Rome, dignified and amiable in look. There were many others whose names have not remained inscribed so deeply in the annals of the time, or have retained their hold on the memory of its survivors. But one was there, who no doubt entered as he came out ; without a flutter of anxiety, when he faced the

gate on either side. This was Odescalchi, young still, most noble in rank and in heart, with saintliness marked in his countenance, and probably already meditating his retreat from dignity and office, and the exchange of the purple robe for the novice's black gown. Many who preferred holiness to every other qualification, looked on his modest features with hope, perhaps, that they might soon glow beneath the ponderous tiara. But God has said, "Look not on his countenance, nor on the height of his stature. Nor do I judge according to the look of men; for man seeth the things that appear, but the Lord beholdeth the heart."<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps not a single person there present noticed one in that procession, tall and emaciated, weak in his gait, and pallid in countenance, as if he had just risen from a bed of sickness, to pass within to that of death. Yet he was a person holding not only a high rank, but an important office, and one necessarily active amidst the population of Rome. For he was its Cardinal Vicar, exercising the functions of Ordinary. Nevertheless, to most he was a stranger: the constant drain of an exhausting complaint not only made him look bloodless, but confined him great part of the year

<sup>1</sup> 1 Reg. xvi. 7.

to his chamber and his bed. Only once before had the writer seen him, on a day and in a place memorable to him, St. Stephen's feast, in the Papal chapel, in 1819.

Such was Cardinal Hannibal della Genga, whom a higher election than that of man's will, had destined to fill the Pontifical throne.

His previous history may be briefly told. He was the sixth of ten children of Count Hilary della Genga, and Mary Louisa Periberti, and was born at the family seat of Della Genga, August the 20th, 1760. He received his early education in a college at Osimo, from which he passed to one established in Rome, for natives of the province whose name it bore, the *Collegio Piceno*. Thence, having embraced the ecclesiastical state, he entered the *Accademia Ecclesiastica*, an establishment already mentioned in the third chapter of our first book. The celebrated Cardinal Gerdil ordained him priest, on the 4th of June, 1783.

Pope Pius VI., visiting the house, and struck with his appearance, his manner, and the quickness of mind perceptible in his conversation, shortly took him into his household. In 1793, notwithstanding his youth, and his strong remonstrances, he was consecrated Archbishop of Tyre, by Cardinal de York, in the cathedral

of Frascati; and sent as nuncio to Lucerne, whence in the following year he went to succeed the illustrious Pacca, in the more important nunciature of Cologne.

In 1805, he became the subject of a grave contest, between the Holy See and Napoleon. For the Pope named him extraordinary envoy to the German Diet, and the Emperor wished the Bishop of Orleans to be appointed. The first prevailed, and ordered the return of Monsignor Della Genga to Germany. He resided at Munich, and was there universally esteemed. In 1808, he was in Paris, engaged in diplomatic affairs, on behalf of his sovereign; and, having witnessed, on returning to Rome, the treatment which he was receiving from his enemies, he retired to the abbey of Monticelli, which he held *in commendam*, and there devoted himself, as he thought for life, to the instruction of a choir of children, and the cultivation of music.

He was drawn from his obscurity at the restoration, and deputed to present to Louis XVIII., at Paris, the Pope's letter of congratulation. This circumstance led to differences between him and Cardinal Consalvi, nobly repaired on both sides, when the one had mounted the throne. But Della Genga returned from his mission of courtesy, with a health so shattered,



and an appearance so altered, that people almost fled from him, and he thought seriously of once more returning to his abbey, where he had before prepared his sepulchre, and secured its personal fit, by lying stretched in its narrow cell.

However, in 1816, he was raised to the purple, and named Bishop of Sinigaglia. In 1820, he was appointed Vicar of Rome, and discharged the duties of his office with exemplary exactness, zeal, and prudence, till he occupied that highest place of which he had been the deputy.<sup>1</sup>

While we have been thus sketching hastily, and imperfectly, one of many who passed almost unnoticed in the solemn procession to conclave<sup>2</sup>, on the 2nd of September, 1823, we may suppose the doors to have been inexorably closed on those who composed it. The conclave, which formerly used to take place in the Vatican, was on this occasion, and has been on subsequent ones, held in the Quirinal palace. This noble

<sup>1</sup> These details of Leo XII.'s earlier life are condensed from the "*Histoire du Pape Léon XII.*," by the Chevalier Artaud de Montor. 2 vols.

<sup>2</sup> English writers commit a common error by speaking of "the conclave," as meaning the assembled body of cardinals, on any occasion. The word is only applied to them when "locked up together," for election of the Pope. When assembled by him, they compose "a Consistory."

building, known equally by the name of Monte Cavallo, consists of a large quadrangle, round which run the papal apartments. From this, stretches out, the length of a whole street, an immense wing, divided in its two upper floors into a great number of small but complete suites of apartments, occupied permanently, or occasionally, by persons attached to the Court.

During conclave these are allotted, literally so, to the cardinals, each of whom lives apart, with his attendants. His food is brought daily from his own house, and is overhauled, and delivered to him in the shape of "broken victuals," by the watchful guardians of the *turns* and lattices, through which alone anything, even conversation, can penetrate into the seclusion of that sacred retreat. For a few hours, the first evening, the doors are left open, and the nobility, the diplomatic body, and in fact all presentable persons may roam from cell to cell, paying a brief compliment to its occupant, perhaps speaking the same good wishes to fifty, which they know can only be accomplished in one. After that all is closed; a wicket is left accessible for any cardinal to enter, who is not yet arrived; but every aperture is jealously guarded by faithful janitors, judges and prelates of various tribunals, who relieve one another. Every letter even

is opened and read, that no communications may be held with the outer world. The very street on which the wing of the conclave looks is barricaded and guarded by a picquet at each end ; and as, fortunately, opposite there are no private residences, and all the buildings have access from the back, no inconvenience is thereby created.

While conclave lasts, the administrative power rests in the hands of the Cardinal Chamberlain, who strikes his own coins during its continuance ; and he is assisted by three cardinals, called the " Heads of Orders," because they represent the three orders in the sacred college of bishops, priests, and deacons. The ambassadors of the great powers receive fresh credentials to the conclave, and proceed in state, to present them to this delegation, at the *grille*. An address, carefully prepared, is delivered by the envoy, and receives a well-pondered reply from the presiding cardinal.

In the meantime, within, and unseen from without, *fervet opus*. That human feelings, and even human passions, may find their way into the most guarded sanctuaries, we all know too well. But the history of conclaves is far from justifying the estimate made of them by many prejudiced writers. There will indeed be, at all

times, diversities of opinion on matters of ecclesiastical and civil polity. As to both, this is sufficiently obvious. For, in the former, there will be some who conscientiously desire things to be ruled with a strong hand, and corrected by severe measures, while others will be in favour of a more gentle pressure, and a gradual reform. Some will be inclined to yield more to the demands of the temporal power, and so prevent violent collisions; others will think it safer to resist every smaller encroachment, that may lead to greater usurpations. It may even happen that a politico-ecclesiastical cause of division exists. These may consider Austria as the truest friend of religion, and best defender of the Church; while those may look on France as most earnest and powerful, in attachment to the faith.

And it must, indeed, be further observed, that the election is of a prince as well as of a pontiff, and that serious diversities of opinion may be held, relative to the civil policy most conducive to the welfare of subjects, and the peace even of the world.

Thus, upon the three great divisions of papal rule, the purely ecclesiastical, the purely civil, and the mixed, there may be held, by men of most upright sentiments and desires, opinions

widely different; and when a choice has to be made of one who has to work out his own principles, it is most natural that each elector will desire them to be in harmony with his own. But it is equally in conformity with ordinary social laws, that, in spite of personal peculiarities of ideas, men should combine in the unity of certain general principles, and that some individuals, more energetic or more ardent than others, should become the representatives and leaders of all consentient with them, and so come to be reputed heads of parties, or even their creators.

Such divisions in opinion will be more deeply marked, and more inevitably adopted, after violent agitations and great changes, such as had distinguished the pontificate of Pius. The Church and the State had almost had to be reorganised, after such devastation as had completely swept away the ancient landmarks. New kingdoms had arisen which literally effaced the outlines of old ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and even what before had been a Catholic state had come under Protestant dominion. Conventual life and property had been annihilated in most of Europe; canon law had been abolished, church endowments had been confiscated; civil codes had been introduced at variance with ecclesiastical jurisprudence; the

authority of bishops had been deprived of all means of enforcing its decrees ; in fine, a state of things had been produced totally different from what the Catholic world had ever before seen.

Many still alive remembered well the epoch antecedent to these changes, and formed living links with what had been, and what was justly considered, the healthy condition of the Church. They deplored the alteration ; and they believed that too much had been conceded to the changeable spirit of the times. This would be enough to form a serious and most deeply conscientious party, in the highest and best sense of the word. Others might just as conscientiously believe that prudence and charity had guided every portion of the late policy, and wish it to be continued under the same guidance. Without exaggeration, we may allow such conflicts of principle to have swayed the minds of many who entered the conclave of 1823 ; while there were others who had espoused no decided views, but had simply at heart the greatest general good, and reserved their final judgment to the period when they must authoritatively pronounce it. From such a condition of things it may happen that a papal election will appear like a compromise. The extreme views on either side must be softened:

the intermediate party will do this. Two thirds of the votes are required for a valid election. If this proportion could be commanded by one section, it would cease to be a party, and, therefore, where different opinions divide the body, a moderate view, more or less conciliatory, will prevail after a time ; and the choice will probably fall on one who has lost the confidence of none, but who has not taken a prominent part in public affairs.

Such was, perhaps, the case in the election of Leo. That of the reigning Pontiff is an instance of unanimity and promptness almost without a parallel.

It is not to the purpose of this volume to describe the manner in which the business of the conclave is carried on. Suffice it to say, that twice a day, the cardinals meet in the chapel belonging to the palace, included in the enclosure, and there, on tickets so arranged that the voter's name cannot be seen, write the name of him for whom they give their suffrage. These papers are examined in their presence, and if the number of votes given to any one do not constitute the majority, they are burnt in such a manner, that the smoke, issuing through a flue, is visible to the crowd usually assembled in the square outside. Some day, instead of this usual signal to

disperse, the sound of pick and hammer is heard, a small opening is seen in the wall which had temporarily blocked up the great window over the palace gateway. At last the masons of the conclave have opened a rude door, through which steps out on the balcony the first Cardinal Deacon, and proclaims to the many, or to the few, who may happen to be waiting, that they again possess a sovereign and a Pontiff. On the occasion of which we treat, the announcement ran as follows:—

“I give you tidings of great joy; we have as Pope the most eminent and reverend Lord, Hannibal Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church Della Genga, Priest of the title of St. Mary’s beyond the Tiber, who has assumed the name of Leo XII.”<sup>1</sup>

The news flew like electricity through the city, almost as quickly as the cannon’s roar proclaimed it. This was on the 28th of September, after a short conclave of twenty-five days.

On the 5th of October the imposing ceremony

<sup>1</sup> Although it is a well-known fact that a Pope on his accession takes a new name, by usage one already in the catalogue of his predecessors, it is not so generally known that, in the signature to the originals of Bulls, he retains his original Christian name. Thus Leo XII. would continue to sign himself as “Hannibal,” and the present Pope signs “John,” at the foot of the most important ecclesiastical documents. The form is, “Placet Joannes.”



of Leo's coronation took place. For the first time I witnessed pontifical High Mass in St. Peter's. All was new : the ceremony, the circumstances, the person. As has been before observed, the infirmities of Pius VII. had prevented him from officiating solemnly ; so that many of us who had already passed several years in Rome had not witnessed the grandest of pontifical functions. But strange to say, though some of our body had shortly before received holy orders from his hands, in his private oratory, as I had not enjoyed that privilege, the countenance, from which later I had to receive so many benign looks, was all but new to me. And the peculiar moment in which he stands painted, clear as an old picture, in my memory, was one which can only be once passed in each pontificate. As the procession was slowly advancing towards the high altar of the Vatican basilica, it suddenly paused, and I was but a few feet from the chair of state, on which, for the first time, the Pontiff was borne. No other court could present so grand and so overpowering a spectacle. In the very centre of the sublimest building on earth, there stood around a circle of officers, nobles, princes, and ambassadors in their dazzling costumes ; and within them the highest dignitaries of religion on earth, bishops and

patriarchs of the western and of the eastern Church, with the sacred college in their embroidered robes, crowned by heads, which an artist might have rejoiced to study, and which claimed reverence from every beholder. But rising on his throne, above them, was he whom they had raised there, in spite of tears and remonstrances. Surely, if a life of severe discipline, of constant suffering, and of long seclusion had not sufficed to extinguish ambition in his breast, his present position was calculated naturally to arouse it. If ever in his life there could be an instant of fierce temptation to self-applause, this might be considered the one.

And wherefore this pause in the triumphant procession towards the altar over the Apostles' tomb, and to the throne beyond it? It is to check the rising of any such feeling, if it present itself, and to secure an antidote to any sweet draught which humanity may offer; that so the altar may be approached in humility, and the throne occupied in meekness. A clerk of the papal chapel holds up right before him a reed, surmounted by a handful of flax. This is lighted: it flashes up for a moment, dies out at once, and its thin ashes fall at the Pontiff's feet, as the chaplain, in a bold sonorous voice, chaunts aloud: "*Pater Sancte, sic transit gloria mundi.*"

“Holy Father, thus passeth away the world’s glory!” Three times is this impressive rite performed in that procession, as though to counteract the earthly influences of a triple crown.

The Pope, pale and languid, seemed to bend his head, not in acquiescence merely, but as though in testimony to that solemn declaration; like one who could already give it the evidence of experience. His eye was soft and tender, moist indeed and glowing with spiritual emotion. He looked upon that passing flash as on a symbol which he deeply felt, as on the history of a whole pontificate — of his own — not long to read. But the calm serenity with which he seemed to peruse it, the sincere acceptance of the lesson stamped upon his features, allowed no suspicion of an inward feeling that required the warning. It seemed in most perfect harmony with his inmost thoughts.

## CHAPTER II.

## CHARACTER AND POLICY OF LEO THE TWELFTH.

YEARS of suffering, by lowering illness, had robbed the Pope, already in his sixty-fourth year, of many graces which adorned his earlier life. He appeared feeble and fatigued, his features, never strongly marked, wore upon them a sallow tinge, though the marks of age were not deeply engraven on them. His eye, however, and his voice, compensated for all. There was a softness and yet a penetration in the first, which gained at sight affection and excited awe: which invited you to speak familiarly, yet checked any impulse to become unguarded. And his voice was courteously bland and winning; he spoke without excitement, gently, deliberately, and yet flowingly. One might hear him make severe remarks on what had been wrong, but never in an impetuous way, nor with an irritated tone.

On the occasion alluded to at the close of last chapter, that look which had been fixed with a mild earnest gaze upon the "smoking flax"

swept over the crowd, as the procession moved on ; and I should doubt if one eye which it met did not droop its lid in reverence, or feel dim before the brighter fire that beamed on it. This was at least the impression which actual experience in that moment suggested.

But besides these pleasing characteristics, there was another, which admirably became his exalted position. This was a peculiar dignity and gracefulness, natural and simple, in his movements, especially in ecclesiastical functions. Being tall in person, the ample folds, and even somewhat protracted length, of the pontifical robes gave grandeur to his figure, though his head might have been considered small ; he stood conspicuous among his attendants ; and he moved with ease, and yet with stateliness, from place to place. And then his countenance glowed with a fervent look of deep devotion, as though his entire being were immersed in the solemn rite on which he was intent, and saw, and heard, and felt nought else.

There were two portions of the sacred function to which I have alluded, that displayed these two gifts, immeasurably, indeed, removed as they are from one another in quality, but most admirably harmonising when combined. The first of these acts was the communion at

that his first pontifical celebration, and the first at all witnessed by many. It is not easy to describe this touching and over-awing ceremonial to one who has never witnessed it. The person who has once seen it with attention and intelligence needs no description. He can never forget it.

In St. Peter's, as in all ancient churches, the high altar stands in the centre, so as to form the point from which nave, aisle, and chancel radiate or branch. Moreover, the altar has its face to the chancel, and its back to the front door of the church. Consequently the choir is before the altar, though, according to modern arrangements, it would look behind it. The papal throne is erected opposite the altar, that is, it forms the furthest point in the sanctuary, or choir. It is ample and lofty, ascended by several steps on which are grouped, or seated, the Pontiff's attendants. On either side, wide apart, at nearly the breadth of the nave, are benches on which assist the orders of cardinals, bishops, and priests, on one side, and deacons on the other, with bishops and prelates behind them, and then between them and the altar two lines of the splendid noble guard, forming a hedge to multitudes, as varied in class and clan as were the visitors at Jerusalem, at the first

Christian Whitsuntide. Then beyond rises truly grand the altar, surmounted by its sumptuous canopy, which at any other time would lead the eye upwards to the interior of St. Peter's peerless crown, the dome hanging as if from heaven, over his tomb. But not now. At the moment to which we are alluding, it is the altar which rivets, which concentrates, all attention. On its highest step, turned towards the people, has just stood the Pontiff, supported and surrounded by his ministers, whose widening ranks descended to the lowest step, forming a pyramid of rich and varied materials, but moving, living, and acting, with unstudied ease. Now in a moment it is deserted. The High Priest, with all his attendants, has retired to his throne; and the altar stands in its noble simplicity, apparently abandoned by its dignified servants. And yet it is still the object of all reverence. There is something greater there than all that has just left it. Towards it all look; towards it all bend, or kneel, and worship. There stand upon it, alone, the consecrated elements, on the paten and in the chalice. The sovereign Pontiff himself is nothing in their presence: he is a man, dust and ashes, there, in the presence of his Lord and Maker.

The Cardinal Deacon advances to the front of

the altar, takes thence the paten, elevates it, and then deposits it on a rich veil, hung round the neck of the kneeling Sub-deacon, who bears it to the throne. Then he himself elevates, turning from side to side, the jewelled chalice; and with it raised on high, descends the steps of the altar, and slowly and solemnly bears it along the space between altar and throne. A crash is heard of swords lowered to the ground, and their scabbards ringing on the marble pavement, as the guards fall on one knee, and the multitudes bow down in humble adoration of Him whom they believe to be passing by.

But at this first celebration, and coronation of the new Pope, there was a circumstance connected with this part of the function, that gave it, in the eyes of many, a special interest. The first Cardinal Deacon, to whom of right it belonged to assist the Pontiff in his function, was the ex-minister Consalvi. People who were unable to estimate a strength of character formed by better than worldly principles, were keenly alive to this singular coincidence. It was sufficiently known that the two had not agreed on important matters; it was confidently reported, that Consalvi had opposed the election of Leo; it had been said, that before then, at the Restoration in France, sharp words had



been addressed by the powerful minister to the prelate Della Genga ; and the public, or the world, or whatever it is called, took it for granted that angry and even resentful passions must rankle in the hearts of both, and could not be concealed, even near the altar which represented the Calvary of reconciliation. The one considered by the common mind to have been trampled under foot, borne on the chair of triumph ; he who had humbled him walking by him as his deacon, — what Lawrence was to Xystus, — surely this was a position trying to human infirmity in both. No doubt it would have been easy, had this been the feeling on either side, to have escaped from such mutual pain.

As it was, we are told by the biographer of Leo, who moved in a very different sphere from mine — in the diplomatic circle — that keen eyes and observant minds were bent upon the Pontiff and his deacon, to trace some, even casual, look of exultation, or of humiliation, in their respective countenances ; but in vain. Even if they would have “suffered anything human” at another time, each felt himself now engaged in the service of a higher Master, and held his soul in full allegiance to it. Without retaining the slightest recollection of having for an instant looked at the sublime action of that moment

with any such profane thoughts, memory faithfully represents its picture. Calm, dignified, and devout, abstracted from the cares of public life, forgetful of the world in which he had moved, and utterly unconscious of the gazing thousands of eyes around him, advanced the aged minister, now the simple deacon, with steady unfaltering step, and graceful movement. The man whom kings and emperors had honoured with friendship; from esteem for whom the haughty and selfish George of England had broken through all the bonds of premunire and penal statutes, and the vile etiquettes of 300 years, by writing to him; who had glided amidst the crowds of courts unflurried and admired; now shorn of power and highest office, is just as much at home in his dalmatic at the altar, and moves along unembarrassed in his clerical ministry, with countenance and gait as becoming his place as though he had never occupied another. Many a one who had thought that Consalvi's natural post was the congress-hall of Vienna, or the banquet-room of Carlton House, would see in that hour that the sanctuary of St. Peter's was as completely his home. He looked, he moved, he lived that day, as those who loved him could have wished; just as one would himself desire to

do on the last day of his public religious appearance.

But the Pope himself, as he first rose, then knelt at the deacon's approach, must have defied the sharpest eye, that sought in his a gleam of human feeling. Deep and all-absorbing devotion imparted a glow to his pale features; and, however his person might be surrounded by civil pomp and religious magnificence, it was clear that his spirit was conscious of only one single Presence, and stood as much alone as Moses could be said to be, with One other only besides himself, on Sinai. From the hand of his humble minister, he received the cup of holiest love; their cheeks met in the embrace of peace, the servant too partook, as is prescribed in the pontifical Mass, from the same chalice as the master. Who can believe that, in that hour, they were not together in most blessed union?

After this, the new Pontiff was borne to the *loggia*, or balcony, above the door of St. Peter's, and the triple crown was placed upon his head by the Cardinal Dean, the venerable Pacca. He then stood up to give his first solemn benediction to the multitudes assembled below. As he rose from his chair to his full height, raised his eyes, and extended his arms, then, joining his hands, stretched forth his right hand and blessed, no-

thing could exceed the beauty and nobleness of every motion and of every act. Earnest and from the heart, paternal and royal at once, seemed that action which indeed was far more ; for every Catholic there — and there were few else — received it as the first exercise, in his favour, of vicarial power from Him whose hands alone essentially contain “benediction and glory, honour and power.”

The promises of the new reign were bright and spring-like. If the Pope had not taken any part in public affairs, if his health had kept him even out of sight, during previous years, he now displayed an intelligence, and an activity, which bade fair to make his pontificate one of great celebrity. But he had scarcely entered on its duties, when all the ailments of his shattered constitution assailed him with increased fury, and threatened to cut short at once all his hopeful beginnings. Early in December he was so ill as to suspend audiences ; before the end he was considered past recovery. In the course of January, 1824, he began to rally, against all hope. On the 26th of that month, I find the following entry in the journal before me : — “ I had my first audience of Leo XII. He was ill in bed, as pale as a corpse, and much thinner than last year, but cheerful and conversable. .

. . . I said, 'I am a foreigner, who came here at the call of Pius VII. six years ago; . . . my first patrons, Pius VII., Cardinals Litta, De Pietro, Fontana, and now Consalvi, are dead.' (Here the Pope hung down his head, shut his eyes, and put his hand on his breast with a sigh.) 'I therefore recommend myself to your Holiness's protection, and hope you will be a father to me, at this distance from my country.' He said he would," &c.

All Rome attributed the unexpected recovery to the prayers of a saintly bishop, who was sent for, at the Pope's request, from his distant see of Macerata. This was Monsignor Strambi, of the Congregation of the Passion. He came immediately, saw the Pope, assured him of his recovery, as he had offered up to Heaven his own valueless life in exchange for one so precious. It did indeed seem as if he had transfused his own vitality into the Pope's languid frame. He himself died the next day, the 31st of December, and the Pontiff rose like one from the grave.

As he recovered, his character and his policy gradually developed themselves. In the first a great simplicity, in the second an active spirit of reform, was manifested. Of the first quality, as exhibited in his personal habits, there will be a better opportunity to say a few words. But it

showed itself in other ways. His reign, even taking into account its brief duration, will appear less distinguished than those of his predecessors, or successors, by the want of great public works. This, however, is at least partly due to the quality just mentioned in his character.

A peculiar feature in monumental Rome is the chronicle which it bears on itself of its own history. Sometimes the foreigner is pleased to smile, or to snarl, as his temper may lead, at what he considers a pompous inscription on a trumpery piece of work: a marble slab, in a ponderous frame, to commemorate a spur or buttress in brick, reared against an ancient monument. And yet, in several ways, this has its uses. It is a traditional custom, which offers many advantages. How do we trace out the history of an ancient edifice so well as by the inscriptions found in, or near, its ruins, which preserve the names of its restorers, or of those who added a portico or fresh decorations? How do we recover its form and architecture so accurately, as from a medal on which it has been represented, by the Emperor, or family, that built, or repaired, or embellished it? How, again, should we trace out the dark history of mediæval monuments, their destruction by time or by fire, without the rude verses, and cramped tablets that run

along them, or hang upon them? And indeed little should we have known of catacomb life and story, had the early Christians been less talkative in marble, and disdained to scratch the names of the dead and the feelings of the living on plaster or stone.

It is, therefore, the tradition of Rome to transmit "sermons in stones;" and as we are now thankful for the annals thus handed down to us from ancient times, let us be glad likewise that recent epochs have prepared similar advantages for remote posterity. The style, too, of such inscriptions follows the variations of taste, as decidedly as do the monuments on which they are carved. They are, in fact, themselves artistic monuments. It saves, moreover, much trouble to the visitor of a great city to see at once, written in large capitals upon the front of each lofty building, its name, age, founder, and use. He cannot mistake an hospital for the war office, nor an exchange for a court of justice. He learns to what saints a church is dedicated; and if it possess an historical name, he at once seizes it.

Were London ever again to become a ruin, a few fragments of plaster might disclose the whereabouts of a dissenting chapel, and a queer old tablet might tell of some humble alms-

houses, founded by an eminent merchant. The remaining inscriptions would be the débris of shop fronts and *facias* (whatever that means), with a few brass plates bearing the names of a dentist or a drawing-master, or, what Lord Macaulay's sketchy New-Zealander might consider a leave for admission to some congenial fancy sports of cudgel or fist, "Knock and Ring."

But, whether the practice be good or bad, Leo XII. certainly did not adopt it. It was generally understood that he would not allow his name to be placed on any of his works. It was even said that, having visited some hydraulic machinery on the roof of St. Peter's, for raising water thither, and being shown by the Cardinal archpriest of the church, Galeffi, an inscription recording that it was done in his pontificate, he desired it to be removed.

Some great works, indeed, were undertaken in his reign, but not finished; so that the glory which mankind usually awards to success is associated with other names. Yet should he be denied the merit of having commenced them? and after all, the daring required to plan and begin on a noble scale contains in it, or rather is, the germ of the untiring patience required to accomplish. One of these vast enterprises was the rebuilding of the great Ostian basilica, con-



sumed by fire in the last days of his predecessor. It was soon discovered that no single portion of the edifice was secure, that not a fragment of wall could be allowed to stand. Many were for merely covering the centre altar and tomb with a moderately sized church, and leaving the ample nave to be a Palmyra in the wilderness. But the Holy Father took a more generous view. In spite of an exhausted treasury, and of evil times, he resolved to begin the work of reconstruction on the original scale of the immense edifice which bore the name, in golden mosaic, of his holy patron, St. Leo the Great. He appealed, indeed, to the charity of the faithful throughout the world, and he was generously answered. But the sums thus collected scarcely sufficed for preliminary expenses<sup>1</sup>: those who, like myself, can remember the endless shoring up and supporting of every part of the fire-eaten walls, and the magnificent scaffolding that for strength would have borne an army, and for ease and security of access would not have imperilled a child, can easily imagine what treasures were spent before a stone was laid upon the ground. But, in the mean time, the crow-bar and the mine were dislodging huge masses from Alpine quarries, the blocks of

<sup>1</sup> Fr. 1,600,000.

granite which had to form the monolith shafts of the giant columns for the nave and aisles, in all four rows, besides the two, still more colossal, which the Emperor of Austria gave to support the triumphal arch leading to the sanctuary. Each, when shaped on the mountain side, had to be carried down to the sea, embarked in a vessel of special construction, brought round Sicily into the Tiber, and landed in front of the church. But what the subscriptions, however generous, did not reach, the munificence of succeeding pontiffs has amply supplied. The work is now finished, or nearly so; and the collections made form but a very secondary item in the budget of its execution.

Another great and useful work, not fully completed till the reign of his second successor, was the repression of the ravages committed by the Anio at Tivoli. That beautiful river, which every traveller eagerly visits to admire it, not in tranquil course, but as broken and dashed to pieces in successive waterfalls, used to gain its celebrity at the expense of the comfort and prosperity of the town through which it rushed. The "*præceps* Anio" often forgot its propriety, and refused to do as Thames was bid, "always keep between its banks." As it pushed headlong toward the spot where the traveller expected it,

in the Sibyl's cave, boiling and torturing itself with deafening roar, it would at times swell and burst its bounds, sweeping away the houses that bordered it, with road, wall, and bridge, not only hurling them below, but bearing them into a huge chasm, in which it buried itself underground. In the mean time, above the deep cold dell into which you dive to see these mysteries of Anio's urn, raised high on a pedestal of sharply cut rock, and seated as on a throne of velvet verdure, towers, like a pinnacle projected on the deep blue sky, the graceful temple of the Sibyl, that most exquisite specimen of art crowning nature, in perfect harmony of beauties. One of those traitorous outbreaks of this classical stream occurred in November, 1826. It was more than usually destructive ; and the ravages committed, and the damage inflicted, on the neighbouring inhabitants were beyond the reach of local resources. The Pope gave immediate orders for effectual repairs, on such a scale as would give security against future repetition of the calamity. A great deal was done ; and, in the October of the following year, he went, according to his practice, without giving notice, to inspect the progress of his works. It may well be imagined what delight this unexpected visit caused to the inhabitants of that poor, though industrious and

beautiful, city. They crowded around him, and accompanied him to the cathedral, where, after the usual function of benediction, he received in the sacristy the clergy and people of the place.

Later, it was found necessary to take a bolder and more effectual measure, that of cutting a double and lofty tunnel through the hard travertine rock; and diverting the main stream before it reaches the town. These *cunicoli*, as they are called, form one of the grandest works of Gregory the Sixteenth's pontificate. They are worthy of Imperial Rome, bold, lofty, airy, and perfectly finished. Instead of having diminished the natural beauties of Tivoli, they have enriched it with an additional waterfall of great elevation, for they pour their stream in one sheet into the valley beyond; and when time shall have clothed its border with shrubs, and its stones with moss, it will not be easy to discern in the work the hand of man, unless a well-timed and well-turned inscription records its author. One of the annual medals of Gregory's pontificate not only records, but represents it.

Here are instances of important undertakings on which the name of Leo might have been inscribed, had he so wished it. Nor was he behind his predecessors in attending to the usual and characteristic progress of whatever relates

to art. The library, the museum, excavations, public monuments, were as studiously attended to, and as steadily improved or carried on, as at any other time. So that his pontificate was by no means a stagnant one; though records of its works may be sought in vain. Proofs will not be wanting as we proceed.

## CHAPTER III.

## CONTINUATION.

THE policy of the Pope manifested an active spirit of reform. This pervaded every part of his public government, from general administration to minute details. He placed the finances of the state under rigid administration, and brought them into such a condition, that he was able early to diminish taxation to no inconsiderable degree. Immediately after his coronation, he abolished several imposts; in March 1824, and January 1825, still further reductions were made in taxes which pressed unequally on particular classes. If I remember right, some of these abolitions affected considerably the private revenues of the Pontiff. What rendered the reductions more striking was, that they were made in the face of considerable expenses immediately expected, on occasion of the Jubilee. But so far from these having disturbed the equilibrium of the financial system, the Pope found himself able, at its close, that is, on

January 1, 1826, to reduce the property-tax 25 per cent throughout his dominions.

As it was the heaviest and principal of all the taxes affecting land and whatever exists upon it, this measure was the removal of an universal burthen, and a relief to every species of industry and of capital.

It was generally understood that the Pope had another most highly beneficial measure in contemplation; and that, by the rigid economy of which his treasurer Cristaldi was the soul, he had nearly put by the whole sum requisite for its completion. This was the repurchase of the immense landed property in the Papal States, settled, with equity of redemption, by the Congress of Vienna, upon the family of Beauharnais. All the land which had belonged to religious corporations, including many large and noble monastic edifices, in several fertile provinces of the north, had been given as a dotation to Prince Eugene, with remainder to his family. The inconveniences and evils resulting from this most arbitrary arrangement were numerous and manifest. Not only was a gigantic system of absenteeism established perpetually in the heart of the country, and a very large income carried abroad, which otherwise would have been laid out on the spot; but an undue influence was

thereby created over a very susceptible population, through the widely-scattered patronage held by the administrators of the property. In every greater town some spacious building contained the offices of the *Appannaggio*, as it was called, with a staff of collectors, clerks, overseers, land-surveyors, and higher officers; and in almost every village was a branch of this little empire, for managing the farms, and even smaller holdings, of former communities. Many of the employed were, moreover, foreigners, whose religion was in declared antipathy to that of the natives; and whose morals neither edified nor improved the population.

To get rid of such an unnatural, and anomalous state of things could not but be desirable for all parties. To the Papal government, and to the inhabitants of those provinces, it was a constant eye-sore, or rather a thorn in the side. An immense bulk of property, unalienable except in mass, mixed up with the possessions of natives, checked the free course of speculation in land, by exchange or purchase; and kept up the competition of overwhelming resources, though far from well applied, in cultivation and management. To the holder of the property, its tenure must have been very unsatisfactory. Situated so far from his residence and his other



estates, it had to be managed by a cumbrous and complicated administration, scattered over a broad territory ; which, no doubt, swallowed up a considerable share of profits.

It was, therefore, one object of Leo's financial economy to redeem this valuable portion of his dominions from the hand of the stranger. Had his reign been prolonged a few years, he would probably have succeeded ; but his successor occupied the throne for a period too brief to accomplish much ; and the revolution, which broke out at the very moment of Gregory's accession, soon absorbed the contents of the treasury, and threw into confusion the finance of the country for many years.

Still, at a later period (1845), he was able to accomplish this work. Under the papal sanction a company was formed at Rome, in which the highest nobility took shares and direction, to repurchase the entire Apanage. Sufficient means were soon raised ; the predetermined sum was paid ; the country was cleared of the stranger power ; and the property was easily sold to neighbouring or other proprietors, on equitable conditions. Gradual liquidation for the land and the stock on it was permitted, and thus many families have greatly increased their former possessions.

Besides improving so materially the financial state of his dominions, the Pope turned his attention to many other points of government. Soon after his accession he published a new code, or digest of law. This was effected by the *Motu proprio* of October 5, 1824, the first anniversary of his coronation. It is entitled *Reformatio Tribunalium*, and begins by mentioning that Pius VII. had appointed a commission, composed of able advocates, to reform the mode of procedure in 1816; and that, on his own accession, he had ordered a thorough revision to be made of their labours. After great pains taken to correct and perfect it, it had been submitted to a congregation of Cardinals, and approved by them. But the Pope adds, that he had been particularly anxious for the reduction of legal fees and expenses, and that he was ready to make any sacrifice of the public revenues, necessary to secure "cheap justice" to his subjects.

Education, in its highest branches, was another object of his solicitude. The Papal States contained several universities, besides other places of education which partook of the nature and possessed the privileges of such institutions. By the Bull "*Quod Divina Sapientia*," published August 28, 1824, Leo reorganised the entire

university system. The universities of Rome and Bologna composed the first class. Ferrara, Perugia, Camerino, Macerata, and Fermo had universities of an inferior grade. Those of the first class had each thirty-eight, those of the second seventeen, chairs.

To take Rome as the example of the first class ; it was composed of theological, medical, legal, and philosophical faculties, or colleges, as they are called in Italy, to which was added another with the title of the philological ; and these were completely reconstructed. The philosophical college comprehended not only every branch of mathematics, but chemistry and engineering. A youth could offer himself for examination and receive degrees in this faculty. And so in the philological department, degrees could be taken in all the languages of which chairs exist there, that is, in Greek, Hebrew, Syro-Chaldaic, and Arabic. The members of the faculties were not merely professors of the university, but men eminent in the pursuits which they represented, in other institutions of the city, or even in private life.

A special congregation was created for the supervision of studies throughout the Papal States, under the title of "The Congregation of Studies ;" to which belongs the duty of

approving, correcting, or rejecting, changes suggested by the different faculties; of filling up vacancies in chairs; and watching over the discipline, morals, and principles, of all the universities and other schools.

It is certain that a new impulse was given to study by this vigorous organisation. Scholars from every part of Italy, and from other countries, not content with obtaining the annual prizes, studied for the attainment of degrees, which, besides being reputed honourable, formed a valuable qualification for obtaining chairs, or other preferment, at a distance. Among his former auditors, within the compass of two years, the writer can now reckon a Patriarch of Jerusalem, a Bishop, a Vicar-General of a distinguished See, four professors in Universities, and one at least in a great public institution. These he has come across or heard of since; others, from their sterling qualities, he has no doubt have advanced to high positions also.

But a more important improvement was made by this constitution. With the exception of a few theological professorships possessed, from a long period, by religious orders, all the chairs were thrown open to public competition.<sup>1</sup> On a

<sup>1</sup> "Professores in posterum deligantur per concursum." Tit. v. No. 53.

vacancy by death or superannuation, notice was to be given, and a day appointed for examination in writing of such competitors as had sent in satisfactory testimonials of character. The only ground of exception and preference, was the having published such a work on the matter of the class, as might well stand in the place of a mere examination paper, and as was allowed to prove the author's competency for the professorship to which he aspired.<sup>1</sup> And, in addition to this, the Pope made the emoluments of the chairs better objects of ambition, by considerably increasing them. Indeed, he was most generous in providing means for the higher education of his subjects, lay and clerical. While he restored to the Society of Jesus the schools of the great Roman College, which had been carried on by the secular clergy since the time of Clement XIV., he founded and endowed classes under the superintendence of the latter at the old German College, where education begins almost with its very rudiments and reaches the highest point of ecclesiastical erudition.

It will not be uninteresting to add, that Leo XII. ordered the works of Galileo, and others of a similar character, to be removed

<sup>1</sup> Tit. v. No. 70.

from the Index, in the edition published during his pontificate.

Speaking of church matters, it would be unjust to the memory of this Pope, not to mention other improvements, which were the fruits of his reforming spirit. He made a new readjustment of the parishes of Rome. There, as elsewhere, great inequalities existed in the labour, and in the remuneration, of parish priests. The richer quarters of the city, of course, were comparatively more lucrative than where all was misery; and yet the calls of charity were most urgent in the last. Leo made a new division of parishes; of seventy-one existing parish churches he suppressed thirty-seven, some very small, or too near one another, and retained thirty-four. To these he added nine, making the total number forty-three.<sup>1</sup> He moreover equalised their revenues; so that wherever the income of the parish priest did not reach a definite sum considered necessary for a decent maintenance, this was made up from other sources guaranteed by the Government. Every one must approve of this just reform. But it is only fair to add, that nothing approaching to riches was thus provided. Ecclesiastical wealth is unknown in Rome, and the main-

<sup>1</sup> Bull "Super Universum," Nov. 1, 1824.

tenance secured to a rector of a Roman parish would be treated as a sorry provision for a London curate.

There was an anecdote current at Rome, when this new circumscription was going on. The Pope, in his plans, intended the Chiesa Nuova to be a parish church. This belongs to the Fathers of the Oratory, founded, as all the world now knows, by St. Philip Neri. It was said that the superior of the house took, and showed, to the Holy Father, an autograph memorial of the Saint to the Pope of his day, petitioning that his church should never be a parish. And below it was written that Pope's promise, also in his own hand, that it never should. This Pope was St. Pius V. Leo bowed to such authorities, said that he could not contend against two saints, and altered his plans.

Another ecclesiastical change introduced by him affected religious corporations. Besides the greater houses of different orders, there were several small communities of branches from them which seemed dying out, and in which it was difficult to maintain full monastic observance. These he took measures gradually to suppress, by allowing the actual members to incorporate themselves with similar or cognate establish-

ments, or, by receiving no more novices, gradually to be dissolved. Such a measure had of course its disapprovers ; but certainly it was undertaken in a sincere spirit of enforcing, to the utmost, religious observance.

It may interest many readers but little, to learn the full extent which the reforming spirit of this Pontiff contemplated. Yet even those who affect indifference to whatever concerns Rome and its sovereign bishops, will not refuse evidence which proves in one of them the sincere and efficacious desire to amend abuses, even in matters apparently trifling.

Some of these reforms, certainly, were not inspired by any desire of popularity. They were decidedly unpopular, both with strangers and with natives.

For instance, he suppressed, for ever, one of the most singular and beautiful scenes connected with the functions of Holy Week. On the evenings of Thursday and Friday, the church of St. Peter's used to be lighted up by one marvellous cross of light, suspended from the dome. This artificial meteor flung a radiance on the altar, where all other lights were extinguished, and even round the tomb of the Apostles, where, on one evening, certain rites are performed ; it illuminated brightly the balcony under the cupola,



from which venerable relics are exhibited, and it sent a flood of light along every open space, tipping every salient point and coigne with radiance, and leaving sharp-cut shadows beyond. It was such an effect of *chiaro-oscuro*,—the most brilliant *chiaro* and the densest *oscuro*,—as every artist loved to contemplate. But it was over-beautiful: it attracted multitudes who only went to see its grand effects. While pilgrims from the south were on their knees crowded into the centre of the church, travellers from the north were promenading in the wondrous light, studying its unrivalled effects, peeping into the darksome nooks, then plunging into them to emerge again into a sunshine that had no transition of dawn. And, doing all this, they talked, and laughed, and formed chatting groups, then broke into lounging sauntering parties, that treated lightly of all intended to be most solemn. It made one sore and irritable to witness such conduct, nay ashamed of one's home manners, on seeing well-dressed people unable to defer to the sacred feelings of others, bringing what used to be the behaviour in old "Paule's" into great St. Peter's.

Unhappily for generations to come, it was considered impossible to check this disorder, except by removing its cause. The illuminated cross,

which was made of highly burnished copper plates studded with lamps, disappeared, at the beginning of Leo's reign, by his orders; and, except when once renewed as a profane spectacle by the Republican leaders, it has been allowed to lie at rest in the lumber-rooms of the Vatican.

In the two papal chapels raised seats had been long introduced, for the special accommodation of foreign ladies, who could thence follow the ceremonies performed at the altar. The privilege thus granted had been shamefully abused. Not only levity and disrespectful behaviour, not only giggling and loud talking, but eating and drinking, had been indulged in within the holy place. Remonstrance had been vain, and so had other precautions of tickets and surveillance. One fine day, the ladies, on arriving found the raised platform no more; the seats were low on the ground, sufficient for those who came to pray, and join in the services, quite useless for those who came only to stare in wilful ignorance, or scoff in perverse malice.

This respect for God's house, the Pope extended to all other churches. In each he had a Swiss placed, to keep it in order, prevent artistic or curious perambulations, at improper times, and assist in repressing any unbecoming conduct.

Modesty of dress was also inculcated, and enforced in church.

These were not popular measures, and made Pope Leo XII. no favourite with travellers, who claimed "a right to do what they liked, with" what was not "their own." But far beyond the suppression of what was generally popular, like the luminous cross, went another measure, in exciting angry feelings among the people. Though, compared with other nations, the Italians cannot be considered as unsober, and the lightness of their ordinary wines does not so easily produce lightness of head as heavier potations, they are fond of the *osteria* and the *bettola*, in which they sit and sip for hours, encouraged by the very sobriety of their drink. There time is lost, and evil conversation exchanged; there stupid discussions are raised, whence spring noisy brawls, the jar of which kindles fierce passions, and sometimes deadly hate. Occasionally even worse ensues: from the tongue, sharpened as a sword, the inward fury flies to the sharper steel lurking in the vest or the legging; and the body, pierced by a fatal wound, stretched on the threshold of the hostelry, proves the deadly violence to which may lead a quarrel over cups.

To prevent this mischief, and cure the social and domestic evils to which the *drink-shop*, what-

ever it may sell, everywhere leads, the Pope devised the plan of confining them to what this word more literally means. Wine was allowed to be *sold* at the *osteria*, but not allowed "to be drunk on the premises." Immediately within the door was a latticed partition, through which wine could be handed out, and money taken in; but there was no convenience allowed for sitting, and but little for standing. This, it was hoped, would have induced men to take their refreshment home, and share it with their families. And so no doubt many did; while an end was put to drinking bouts, and the incentive of conversation to continue them, as well as to much strife and passion. It threw a portion of the crowd outside, instead of their being sheltered within, and created gatherings round the shop-door; but a sultry sun, or a sharp shower, or a cold winter's night, easily thinned them, and time would soon have soothed the first resentment which there gave itself vent. Nothing, however, could exceed the unpopularity of this measure, of establishing the *cancelletti*, as they were called; so that they were abolished immediately after the Pope's death.

These examples will show how little he valued the pleasant breeze of popular favour, in doing his duty. Some other actions of his will show how this sternness, in remedying or preventing

the vices of the poor, was accompanied by kindness and charity. Soon after his accession, he had one evening finished his audiences, when he asked one of his domestic prelates, who lived out of the palace, and is now a cardinal, if his carriage was below. On his replying in the affirmative, the Pope said he would go out in it: put a cloak about him, descended by a private staircase, and accompanied by his noble attendant, drove to the School of the Deaf and Dumb, where an examination was being held. Such an event had never been before known, and we may imagine the delight and gratitude of pupils and teachers at this most unexpected surprise. He attended to the examinations, and then, with his own hands, distributed the prizes which he had brought with him.

This first instance was often repeated; but it was carried further, even to the lowest depths of misery. He visited the prisons, not only to overlook great improvements which he introduced into them, but to converse with their unfortunate inmates, and relieve their sufferings. In this manner he suddenly appeared at the debtors' prison in the Capitol, inquired personally into cases of hardship, and discharged several prisoners, whose debts he took upon himself. The hospitals also were unexpectedly visited, and

their inmates consoled by the benign presence and soothing words of their holy Pontiff.

Anxious, however, to provide for the just and efficient administration of charitable funds, many of which were misspent on worthless objects, or wasted in the dribblets of separate distributions, he appointed a Commission of high ecclesiastics and irreproachable laymen, to consolidate all the alms-funds of Rome, and see to their equitable distribution. This noble institution, known as the "Congregazione dei Sussidj," was organised by a Decree dated February 17, 1826. It is followed by a beautiful instruction to parochial committees, acting under this board, headed by a gentleman and a "lady of charity," from among the parishioners. Nothing can be more sensible or more full of tender charity to the poor, than this truly episcopal and paternal address.

There was a community of Franciscan nuns, exceedingly edifying by their strict observance, miserably lodged in a steep narrow street behind the Quirinal, unable to keep enclosure from having no external church. The clergy of the English and Scotch colleges often ministered to their spiritual wants, and it has been the writer's privilege to do so. One day, in the very heat of a summer's afternoon, when every one, nuns

He liked to take people by surprise, and see for himself; sometimes, it used to be said, with a very different result from that in the instance quoted.<sup>1</sup>

Before closing this chapter, it may be well to throw together a few more actions, which are connected with its subject, at least remotely, and which could not, perhaps, be so well introduced elsewhere.

Having mentioned his attention to the progress of art, as in harmony with the conduct of all his great predecessors, it may not be amiss to specify one or two instances. The Vatican library is indebted to him for very valuable additions. The principal one, perhaps, is the Cicognara collection of works relative to art. The nobleman whose property it was is well known for a magnificent history of sculpture; a work which unites his name with those of Winkelmann and Agincourt. For the compilation of this book, he had naturally collected most valuable and

<sup>1</sup> A story used to be current, the truth of which cannot here be vouched for, of his driving, at the same unreasonable hour, to the church of a religious community of men, supposed to be not well kept. He was in it before the members of the house were roused, and knelt at the plain bench or *genuflessorio*, before the altar. He then entered the house, and conversed affably as usual. As he left, a delicate request was made for some memorial of his visit. He replied that he had left one where he had knelt. On going thither they found LEO XII. written on the dust which covered the prie-dieu.

expensive works on every department of art. At his death, this collection was for sale. It was purchased by the Pope, and given to the Vatican library. Besides this, he added many thousands of volumes to its rich stores, so that new rooms had to be incorporated in its immense range. The classical department was particularly increased.

It was during this pontificate also that the germ of the now splendid Etruscan museum was formed. For, the excavations and study of the cities of tombs, which still remain on the borders of Tuscany, belonging to the old Etruscan towns, were peculiarly carried on under this Pope.

He showed himself, indeed, quite as great a patron of art as any other of his predecessors; but he was most anxious that morality should not be compromised by it. A group of statues in the new gallery erected by his predecessor disappeared after his first visit, as did gradually other pieces of ancient sculpture offensive to Christian modesty. When a magnificent collection of engravings representing Canova's works had been prepared, he purchased the plates at an immense cost, I believe at Florence; that he might suppress and destroy such as were not consistent with delicacy of morals.

Among his works must not be forgotten one



which is commemorated on one of his annual medals, the beautiful baptistery which he added to the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, adorned with the richest marbles, and constructed with exquisite taste.

But in conclusion, as illustrative of his good nature and kindness, I will mention a singular visit which he one day unexpectedly received. It is well known that ladies are not admitted into the portion of the palace occupied by the Pope. He leaves his apartment for the museum or library, when he receives them. During hours of general audience the ante-rooms present an appearance of considerable state. Each of them has its body of guards, more for becoming appearance than for any effectual services; and chamberlains, clerical and lay, are in attendance in the inner chambers, as other classes of officers are in the outer. But soon after twelve all this formal court disappears; silence and solitude reign through the papal apartments. Still the person of the sovereign is not quite so badly or weakly guarded as that of Isboseth, the son of Saul, whose only portress used to nod over the tray of corn which she was cleaning. Below, indeed, there is a guard of Swiss, which might allow any one to pass: but at the foot of the staircase of the palace is a sentinel, and in the

great royal hall is a small guard in attendance. This would be the difficult pass ; for the next room is at once the first of the pontifical apartments, occupied by a few servants, who, in the warm hours of day, might easily be dozing.

Be all this as it may ; certain it is, that one afternoon it was announced to the Pope, that a lady had made her way past the guard, and had penetrated far, before she was discovered, into the penetralia of the palace. She had been of course stopped in her progress, or she might have found herself suddenly in the presence chamber, or rather in the study usually occupied by the Pontiff at that hour. What was to be done with her ? was asked in dismay. Such an act of presumption had never before been known ; there was a mystery about her getting in : and this was all the more difficult of solution, because the intruder could not speak Italian, and it could only be collected that she desired to see the Pope. Let it be remembered that secret societies were then becoming alarmingly rife, and that domestic assassination of persons in high places had been attempted, occasionally with success. The Pope apprehended no such danger, and desired the adventurous lady to be admitted at once. He gave her a long audience, treating her with his usual kindness. She was an Ame-

rican woman, who had been seized with a strong charitable desire to convert the Pope from what she considered his errors, and had thus boldly and successfully attempted to obtain a conference with him. That she did not change the Pope is certain ; but that her opinion of him was changed there can be no doubt. For she must have been charmed with the gentleness and sweetness, as well as nobleness and dignity, of his mien and speech.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It was from Cardinal Pacca at the Villa Clementina, that we heard this anecdote ; and he mentioned that the Pope asked her if she had not believed him to have a cloven (or ox's) foot ; but she, halting between her courtesy and her truthfulness, hesitated to answer, especially as she had given furtive glances towards the hem of the papal cassock. On which the Pope good-naturedly convinced her that he was clearly shod on human and Christian principles. The Cardinal added that, in his travels, some Protestant in conversation with him did not deny his belief in that pious and orthodox tradition ; upon which Pacca wittily observed, "If you believe the Pope to be graced with a goat's foot, you must naturally expect us cardinals to be garnished with a kid's. This, you see, is not my case."

Leo had in his apartments a faithful companion, in the shape of a most intelligent little dog. After his death, it was obtained by Lady Shrewsbury, with whom many will remember it.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE JUBILEE.

THE great event of this pontificate undoubtedly was the Jubilee of 1825. The first historical celebration of this festival was in 1300; though it was then said that a vague tradition recorded a similar observance of the first year in the preceding century. It seems as if a spontaneous rush of pilgrims to Rome took place at the beginning of 1300; for the Bull by which it was regulated was not issued till the 21st of February. Boniface VIII. decreed that this should be a centenary feast; Clement VI., in 1342, reduced the interval to fifty years; then it was further brought down to twenty-five. On this plan it was regularly continued for three centuries, till 1775, when Pius VI. celebrated the Jubilee, proclaimed by his predecessor the year before.

The regularity of period naturally produced a systematic mode of proceeding, and regular provisions for its good order. Accordingly, the practice has been, that on Ascension Day of the

preceding year, the Pope promulgates the Holy Year, or Jubilee. On Christmas Eve, he proceeds in state to the great portico of the Vatican basilica; which, though only a vestibule, must needs be of great dimensions, to afford a place for such ceremonies, and the thousands who flock to witness them.

The visitor of Rome may easily have noticed, that, of the five great doors opening from the porch into the church, the one nearest to the palace is walled up, and has a gilt metal cross upon it, much worn by the lips of pilgrims. On inquiry, he will be told that it is the *Porta santa*, or "Holy Gate," like the "King's Gate" at Jerusalem, never to be opened except for most special entrance. Only during the year of Jubilee is this gate unclosed; and it is for the purpose of opening it, as symbolical of the commencement of the Jubilee, that the Pope has descended to the vestibule. The immense church is empty, for the doors have been kept closed all day; an innumerable multitude, beginning with royal princes and descending to the poorest pilgrims from Southern Italy, eagerly wait in the portico and on the steps without. After preliminary prayers from scripture singularly apt, the Pope goes down from his throne, and, armed with a silver hammer, strikes the wall in the

door-way, which, having been cut round from its jambs and lintel, falls at once inwards, and is cleared away in a moment by the active San-pietrini.<sup>1</sup>

The Pope, then, bare-headed and torch in hand, first enters the door, and is followed by the cardinals and his other attendants to the high altar, where the first vespers of Christmas Day are chaunted as usual. The other doors of the church are then flung open, and the great queen of churches is filled. Well does the ceremonial of that day remain impressed on my memory ; and one little incident is coupled with it. Among the earliest to pass, with every sign of reverence and devotion, through the holy gate, I remember seeing, with emotion, the first clergyman who in our times had abandoned dignity and ease, as the price of his conversion. He was surrounded, or followed, by his family in this pilgrim's act, as he had been followed by them in his "pilgrimage of grace." Such a person was rare in those days, and indeed singular : we little thought how our eyes might become accustomed, one day, to the sight of many like him.

<sup>1</sup> These are a body of workmen of "every arm," retained in regular pay by St. Peter's, and wearing a particular dress. They keep the church in its perfect repair and beautiful condition almost without external help. Their activity and intelligence is quite remarkable.

Some reader may perhaps ask in what, after all, consists the Jubilee, what are its duties, and what its occupations? A Catholic easily understands it. It is a year in which the Holy See does all it can to make Rome spiritually attractive, and spiritually only. The theatres are closed, public amusements suspended; even private recreation pressed within the bounds of Lenten regulations. But all that can help the sinner to amendment, or assist the devout to feed his faith and nourish his piety, is freely and lavishly ministered. The pulpit is occupied by the most eloquent preachers, awakening the conscience or instructing ignorance; the confessionals are held in constant possession by priests who speak every language; pious associations or confraternities receive, entertain, and conduct from sanctuary to sanctuary the successive trains of pilgrims; the altars are crowded by fervent communicants; while, above all, the spiritual remission of temporal punishment for sin, known familiarly to Catholics under the name of an Indulgence, is more copiously imparted, on conditions by no means over easy. Rome, during that year, becomes the attracting centre of Catholic devotion, the magnet which draws it from every side. But it does not exhaust it, or absorb it; for multitudes go back full of gratitude to

heaven and to the Holy See for the blessings which they feel they have received, and the edifying scenes in which they have been allowed to partake.

However, before endeavouring to recall to memory a few of these, it may be well to describe some of the preparations for them. To the Pope's own resolute and foreseeing mind, perhaps, alone was due the Jubilee of 1825. There should naturally have been one held the first year of the century. But the calamities of the times, and the death of Pius VI. had effectually prevented its observance. Leo intimated his intention to proclaim it in due course, for its proper year ; and met only opposition on every side.

At home, his Secretary of State feared the introduction into the provinces and into Rome of political conspirators and members of secret societies ; who, under the cloak of the pilgrim's scalloped cape, might meet in safety to plot destruction. The Treasurer was terrified at the inroad which extra expenses would make into his budget, and protested against financial embarrassments that he foresaw would ensue. Yes, reader ! marvel not ; you who have possibly been taught that a Jubilee is one of the happiest devices of Roman astuteness for filling an exhausted ex-



chequer ; a sort of wholesale dealing in spiritual goods, purchased by temporal ones, usually only doled out in retail ! If such has been the doctrine taught you, and believed by you, if nothing else will undeceive you, may you live till next Jubilee, and may you have heart to visit it, and satisfy yourself with your own eyes, whether Rome is the giver or the receiver ; on which side turns the balance of the accounts between the prodigality of her charity and the indigence of her clients. But we shall see.

From abroad, innumerable difficulties were raised. Naples was naturally the power most interested in the coming festival, both from proximity of place, from traditional feelings, and from the easy propensity of its population to abandon home, either in quest of labour or for pilgrim purposes. Its minister was instructed to raise every difficulty, and even to engage the representatives of foreign powers in active opposition. Austria, still under the influence of Josephine ideas, was at the best cold : and the German Protestant powers declared open hostility. Yet in the face of all these obstacles, Leo's only answer was, " Nevertheless the Jubilee shall be ! " And it was.

On Ascension Day he issued the Bull of preparation, clear, bold, and cheering, as a silver

clarion's note. Seldom has a document proceeded even from the Holy See more noble and stately, more tender and paternal. Its language, pure, elegant, and finely rounded, flows with all the greatness of Roman eloquence; yet in tone, in illustration, and in pathos, it is thoroughly Christian, and eminently ecclesiastical. It speaks as only a Pope could speak, with a consciousness of power that cannot fail, and of authority that cannot stray. Its teaching is that of a master, its instruction that of a sage, its piety that of a saint. The Pope first addresses every class of men who recognise his spiritual sovereignty, entreating kings to put no hindrance in the way of faithful pilgrims, but to protect and favour them, and the people readily to accept his fatherly invitation, and hasten in crowds to the banquet of grace spread for them. When, after having warmly exhorted those who, in addition, recognise his temporal dominion, he turns to those who are not of his fold, those even who had persecuted and offended the Holy See, and in words of burning charity and affectionate forgiveness he invites them to approach him and accept him as *their* father too, his words bring back the noble gesture with which he threw open his arms, when he gave his first public benediction, and seemed to make a way to his heart

for all mankind, and then press them to it in a tender embrace.

From the moment this decisive document was issued, some preparations were begun, and others were more actively pursued.

The first class of these preliminaries were of a religious character. *Missioni*, or courses of stirring sermons, calling on sinners to turn from their evil courses, were preached, not merely in churches but in public squares—for the churches did not suffice—so to cleanse the city from sin, and make it a holy place for those who should come to seek edification there. In the immense and beautiful square known to every traveller as Piazza Navona, a concourse of 15,000 persons was said to be present, when the Pope, on the 15th of August, went to close these services by his benediction. It required stentorian lungs to address such a crowd, and be audible; fortunately these were to be found, in contact with a heart full of goodness and piety, in the breast of the Canonico Muccioli. When this zealous man died, still young, a few years later, hundreds of youths belonging to the middle classes, dressed in decent mourning, followed in ranks their friend to his sepulchre. The same tribute of popular affection was exhibited later still, in 1851, to the amiable and edifying Professor Graziosi.

But to return, the Pope took many by surprise, when they saw him, opposite, listening to the Canon's closing sermon from the apartments of the Russian embassy, in the Pamphili palace. Thence he descended, accompanied by his heterodox host and admirer, the Chev. Italinski, to a throne erected for him in the open air.

In addition to this spiritual preparation, material improvements were not forgotten. A visitation of churches, oratories, and all religious institutions had been begun, in virtue of which all irregularities in their arrangements were corrected, dilapidations were repaired, ornaments restored, and old or decayed objects renewed. Considerable expense was thus incurred by some of the greater, and older, basilicas.

But more serious still were the preparations necessary to lodge and feed the crowds of pilgrims who were expected. To prevent any alarm on this head, on the part of foreign princes, the Pope sent word to the embassies that he did not wish them to make any provision for their poor countrymen, as he took upon himself this duty of hospitality. He observed that he would rather pawn the church plate of Rome, than be wanting in its discharge.

There is in Rome a large house, attached to a Church of the Holy Trinity, expressly established

for the charitable entertainment of pilgrims. Hence it is called *La Trinità dei pellegrini*. It is divided into two sides, one for men and the other for women. The ground floor is laid out in immense refectories, above which are dormitories equally vast. During Holy Week there is a certain amount of activity in the house; as a considerable number of pilgrims then arrive, perhaps half a refectory, and as much dormitory, may be occupied. During the rest of the year, the establishment sends a huge carriage, now rather modernised, to the hospitals, to bring away all discharged patients; to whom, under the title of convalescents, it gives three days' hospitality, and leisure often to look out for some occupation.

The revenues of the house, the fruit of charity, are tolerably abundant; so that it used to be said, that, in the interval between two jubilees, they were employed, the first half of the time in paying off the liabilities incurred, and the second in accumulating for the coming celebration. But, in addition to the accommodation permanently secured at home, the charity provided immense lodging room along the wide and airy corridors of religious houses. In the month of November, our confraternity of the Holy Trinity, to which many English belong, lodged and fed for three

days, 23,090 men and 15,754 women, in all 38,844 persons; besides 350 members of branch confraternities. From this some idea may be formed of the scale on which hospitality was exercised during the entire year.

The order observed was the following. The pilgrim, on his arrival at the house, had his papers of pilgrimage examined, and received his ticket of hospitality. In the evening the new comers were brought into a hall surrounded by raised seats, and supplied with an abundant flow of hot and cold water. Then, after a short prayer, the brothers of the confraternity, or the sisters in their part of the house, washed their feet way-worn and sore by days or weeks of travel; and the ointments of the apothecary, or the skill of the surgeon was at hand, to dress wounds and bandage sores. This was no mere ceremony, no symbolical rite; but one saw and felt how in olden times "to wash the feet of the saints," when they asked for a night's harbour, was a real act of charity worthy of the Christian widow. It was evidently an exquisite relief to the jaded wayfarer.

Thus refreshed, the pilgrims joined the long procession to supper. A bench along the wall, and a table before it, railed off to prevent the pressure of curious multitudes, were simple ar-

rangements enough, but the endless length of these, occupied by men of every hue, and many languages, formed a striking spectacle. Before each guest was his plate, knife, fork, and spoon, bread, wine, and dessert. A door in each refectory communicated with a roomy hall, in which huge cauldrons smoked with a supply of savoury soup sufficient for an army. This was the post of honour; a cardinal or nobleman, in the red coarse gown and badge of the brotherhood, with a white apron over it, armed with a ladle, dispensed the steaming fluid into plates held ready; and a string of brothers, at arm's length from one another all round the refectory, handed forward the plates with the alacrity of bricklayers' labourers, and soon furnished each hungry expectant with his reeking portion. Two additional rations were served out in the same manner. The guests fell to with hearty good will, and generally showed themselves right good trencher-men. Opposite each stood a serving man, who poured out his wine, cut his bread, changed his portions, and chatted and talked with him. Now these servitors were not hired, but all brethren of the confraternity; sometimes a royal prince, generally some cardinals, always bishops, prelates, noblemen, priests, gentry, and artificers. Then, occasionally, a sudden commotion, a wavy

movement through the crowd would reach from the outer door, along the passage to the lavatory, just as prayers were beginning. All understood what it meant. The Holy Father was coming without notice. Indeed none was required; he came simply to do what every one else was going to do, only he had the first place. He knelt before the first in the line of pilgrims, taking his chance of who it might be. If any priest were in the number, he was naturally placed first; and he would probably feel more sensitively than a dull uneducated peasant, the honour, not unmixed with humiliation, of having so lowly an office discharged, in his person, by the highest of men on earth. And then, he would find himself waited on at table, by that master who coming suddenly in the night upon his servants, and finding them watching, knows how to gird himself, and passing along, ministers to them.

It was said that among the poor pilgrims came in disguise persons of high rank, who, after they had passed their *triduum* of charity among the poorest, faring as they, and receiving the cup of water as disciples in Christ's name, resumed their place in society, and remained in Rome as visitors, without any indelicate recognition. It was whispered that one couple, a German and his wife, were of even higher blood. Indeed, I re-



member one used often to remark, that the elegant language, the polished manners, and the half-easy, half-embarrassed air of some pilgrims, bespoke a different class from that of the general run. But one thing is very noticeable on all such occasions — the naturalness, and absence of embarrassment (so well expressed by the Italian word *disinvoltura*), with which these poor people received the attentions of persons whom they knew to be of such superior station, civil or ecclesiastical. While they allowed all menial service to be performed by them, without awkward bashfulness, or any attempts to prevent it, they accepted them with an humble thankfulness and a natural grace that showed how clearly they appreciated the motive which prompted their being rendered. They manifestly understood, that not merely to them, but to Him also whom the poor represent, were they offered.

Supper ended, and its baskets of fragments for the morrow's breakfast put by, the long file proceeded up-stairs to bed, singing one of the short religious strains in which all Italians can join, a sort of simultaneous, yet successive, chorus winding along, stunning to your ears at the spot where you chanced to stand, alternately swelling and fading away, as it came from one or other side of the stairs, then dying away in

the deep recesses of the dormitory above, yet seeming to be born again and grow at the beginning of the line, still unemerged from the supper-hall.

During the day, the pilgrims were conducted in bands from sanctuary to sanctuary; were instructed at stated times; were directed to the performance of their higher religious duties, by frequenting the Sacraments; and at the close of the three days were dismissed in peace, and returned home, or remained in the city at their own charge.

The Holy Father was the soul of all this work. To see him, and carry back his blessing, was of course one of the most highly coveted privileges of a pilgrimage to Rome. Hence he had repeatedly to show himself to the crowds, and bless them. They were instructed to hold up whatever they wished to have blessed; and certainly scarcely ever did Rome present a more motley crowd, arrayed in every variety of costume, from the sober, and almost clerical, dress of German peasant, to the rainbow hues of the Abruzzi or Campania. But the Pope manifested his hearty sympathy in his Jubilee by a more remarkable proof than these. He daily served in his own palace twelve pilgrims at table, and his biographer tells us that he continued this practice

throughout his reign.<sup>1</sup> To his accompanying them I well remember being an eye-witness. For one of such delicate health and feeble frame it was no slight undertaking to walk from the Vatican to the Chiesa Nuova; but to perform this pilgrimage barefoot, with only sandals on his feet, was more than any one was prepared for. He was preceded by the poor, surrounded and followed by them. Tears flowed on every side, and blessings were uttered deep and warm. His look was calm and devout, and abstracted from all around. It reminded every one forcibly of St. Charles at Milan, humbling himself by a similar act of public devotion, to appease the Divine wrath manifested in the plague.

It must not be thought that the celebration of the Jubilee completely monopolised the attention of the Pope. No year of his reign was more actively occupied than this, with important affairs, especially abroad. But one great and beneficial improvement within may be traced to this "holy year." The Pope was determined that the roads should be safe for his poor pilgrims, and took such active measures, in concert with neighbouring states, that the system of brigandage was completely extinguished. The last act, however, of its destruction deserves

<sup>1</sup> Chevalier Artaud, vol. ii. p. 48.

recording. A good old priest, the Abbate Pellegrini, Archpriest of Sezze, ventured alone to the mountains which formed the head-quarters and stronghold of the banditti, unauthorised and uninvited. Without pass-word besides the expression of his charity; without a pledge to give that his assurances would be confirmed; without any claim, from position, to the fulfilment of his promises, he walked boldly into the midst of the band, and preached to them repentance and change of life. They listened: perhaps they knew that active measures were being planned for their extermination; more probably the very simplicity and daring of the feeble unarmed peace-maker touched their rude natures, and they wavered. But they were among the most dreaded of their race, nay, the most unpardonable, for some of them had been the assassins of the Terracina students. One of them was their chief Gasbarone, who owned to the commission of many murders. What hope could they entertain of pardon? The old man took upon himself to give his priestly word that their lives would be spared: they believed that word, and surrendered to him at discretion. The city of Sezze was astonished at beholding this herd of wolves led in by a lamb. All admired the heroic action, the self-devoting charity of this

worthy ecclesiastic, who sought no reward, and who might have received a bullet or a stab for his first welcome from those desperadoes, but had done in a few hours what troops and statesmen, in combined action, had not been able to effect in years. His word was respected, his promise fulfilled; and these brutal men are dying out their lives of expiation in the fortress of Civita Vecchia.

Before closing this chapter it may not be out of place to add a few words on a subject connected with the jubilee. The college, so long the writer's home, where he gathered the recollections embodied in this volume, owed its existence to this religious institution. It is true that the Saxon King Ina had opened a home to his countrymen visiting the shrine of the apostles; and this was continued in after ages. Still nothing like an *hospice* for English pilgrims existed till the first great Jubilee, when John Shepherd and his wife Alice, seeing this want, settled in Rome, and devoted their substance to the support of poor palmers from their own country.<sup>1</sup> This small beginning grew into suf-

<sup>1</sup> In this Jubilee several English pilgrims are supposed to have perished by an accident on the bridge of St. Angelo. A mule, kicking in the crowd, caused a pressure against the wooden parapets, which gave way, and a great number of persons were precipitated into the river and drowned.

ficient importance for it to become a royal charity; the King of England became its patron, and named its rector, often a person of high consideration. Among the fragments of old monuments scattered about the house by the revolution, and now collected and arranged in a corridor of the college, is a shield surmounted by a crown, and carved with the ancient arms of England, lions or lionceaux, and fleur-de-lis, quarterly. This used formerly to be outside the house, and under it was the following quaint inscription, the original of which is lost. A copy, however, of it has been obtained from old transcripts, and is painted under the arms, in the original character—

*"Haec conjuncta duo,  
Successus debita legi,  
Anglia dant, regi,  
Francia signa, suo."*

*"Laurentius Chance me fecit  
m.cccc.xij."*

Which may be rudely translated—

*"These arms, whose award  
From succession springs,  
France with England brings  
To their common Lord."*

*"Laurence Chance executed me  
1412."*

In the archives of the college are preserved the lists of the pilgrims who, from year to year, visited Rome; and as the country or diocese from which they came is recorded, it is a valuable document, often consulted for local or family history. Many of the pilgrims were youths of good connections, students at Bologna, who, in their holidays or at the close of their course, chose to visit Rome as pilgrims *in formâ pauperum*, and received hospitality in the "English hospital of St. Thomas." This was extended to a longer period than is granted to Italian pilgrims. Many other nations had also their "hostelries" to receive their countrymen, especially at those periodical seasons

"Whan longan folks to gon on pilgrimages,  
And palmeres for to seken strange strondes."

The rupture of Henry VIII. with the Holy See put an end to the influx of pilgrims from England to Rome; and arrivals pretty nearly ceased under Elizabeth. In the meantime three different English establishments had been united,—those of the Holy Trinity, of St. Thomas, and of St. Edward,—on the spot where the present college stands; and a church had been built, the great altarpiece of which, yet preserved, commemorated the formation of this

coalition. A bishop, and several other refugees for the faith, lived there till Gregory XIII., in 1579, converted the hospital into a college, as then more needed, with the condition that should the religious position of England ever change, the institution should return to its original purpose. May the happy omen be accomplished, but without any necessity for its proposed consequence !

The mention of this place naturally awakens recollections, in which it is associated with the principal subject of this work. The English College and Leo XII. blend together in pleasing harmony among the remembrances on which the writer can look back most gratefully.



## CHAPTER V.

## THE POPE AND THE ENGLISH COLLEGE.

THE recollections of this volume commenced in 1818; the great event of the Jubilee brings us down to 1825. This is a long interval in the season of youth. Its obscure and noiseless duties must, during it, work a change in mind, in feeling, in habits, perhaps in state. So it was here. The aim of years, the goal of long preparation, the longed for crown of unwavering desires, the only prize thought worthy of being aspired to, was attained in the bright Jubilee spring of Rome. It marks a blessed epoch in a life, to have had the grace of the priesthood superadded to the exuberant benedictions of that year. And it was not in usual course; it came of lingering and lagging behind others. Every school-fellow had passed on, and was hard at his noble work at home, was gaining a crown in heaven, to which many have passed; and the loiterer was enjoying, simply enjoying, the fullness of that luxury, spiritual and intel-

lectual, which he and they, so far, had only sipped.

The life of the student in Rome should be one of unblended enjoyment. If he loves his work, or, what is the same, if he throws himself conscientiously into it, it is sweetened to him as it can be nowhere else. His very relaxations become at once subsidiary to it, yet most delightfully recreative. His daily walks may be through the field of art; his resting-place in some seat of the Muses; his wanderings along the stream of time, bordered by precious monuments. He can never be alone; a thousand memories, a thousand associations accompany him, rise up at every step, bear him along. There is no real loneliness in Rome now any more than of old, when a thoughtful man could say that "he was never less alone than when alone." Where would one seek solitude more naturally than in the very cemetery of a cemetery, where the tombs themselves are buried, where the sepulchres are themselves things decayed and mouldering in rottenness? Now in Rome such places exist, yet are peopled still, thronged as streets elsewhere are. That heap of mould contains as yet a whole family, many generations of it; the Nasones, for instance, to which Ovid belonged, or an entire tribe, like the Freedmen, the Liberti

of Augustus, slaves gathered from all climates and moulded into one household, provided not only with board and lodging in life, but also with cinerary accommodation after death,—with amphoræ in the one, and with urns in the other, —or, one might say, with *ollæ* in both. Or there, in that labyrinth under ground, still in a small space lie crowded the great band of noble Scipios, the founders of Rome's transmarine empire, and preparers of her higher civilisation, who thought it a glory to crown the sepulchral inscriptions recording the highest titles of conquest abroad by the bust of Ennius, the gentle father of poetry at home. As Cicero was invited to hear them speak the wisest of heathen morality, the kindest whisperings of an unhoping consolation, so will they not allow us to be lonely whom a higher law teaches to pity, yet not disdain to learn from them. How easily, indeed, does the mind rise here to a higher thought. If these monuments show that the greatest men considered it the greatest glory to have inscribed on their sepulchral slabs, not the name of their own country to distinguish them, but titles derived from distant regions which they conquered; if Scipio cared more to be called the Spanish, or the African, than the Roman; and if, after him, generals and

emperors coveted the surnames of the Parthic, the Germanic, or the British; what must be the higher glory of him who not only absorbed all these titles in himself, but crowned them all by that of the Empire itself, which, deemed by those conquerors invincible, he subdued? Such was the Galilean fisherman, who gained the title of "the Roman," the true "Pontifex Maximus," which he has so transmitted to his successors, that "Roman Pontiff" and "Successor of Peter" have become synonymous.

But to return: the student at Rome so peoples his thoughts with persons, fills his memory with things seen and heard, that his studies are, or ought to be, turgid with the germs of life, rich as the tree in early spring in the assurances of future bloom and fruit. On the darkest page of abstruse theology there will shine a bright ray from an object perhaps just discovered; but on the lighter one of history and practical doctrine there literally sparkle beams of every hue, like flowers reflected in a running stream, from every monument and every record of the past there present, so as to make it truly an illuminated page. The very portrait of every heathen and every Christian emperor is distinct before the mind from numerous effigies; the Rome of his time is traced in ruins, some-

times in standing edifices; his actions often are written on arch or pillar, and many spots are signalled as having been the scenes of some special occurrences connected with his life. Then the whole of Christian life and history legible still, even to the traditional portraiture of apostles, martyrs, and their Head, traced from catacomb to basilica and cloister, makes the history of the Church, her dogmas, practices, and vicissitudes as vivid to the eye as any modern illustrated book can make a record of the past. Indeed, the monumental Church history, by the learned Bianchini, in tables of each successive reign or age, is a volume well known to the learned, as compiled upon this principle.

If such be the student's enjoyment of Rome, exclusive of what art and other resources can supply, and indeed confined to the sphere of his own pursuits, what must be the golden opportunities of one who, freed from the yoke of a repressive discipline, and left to follow the bent of his own inclinations, may plunge into the depths over which he was only allowed to skim the surface, may drink long deep draughts from the fountains which he could only taste? The recollection of them will come back, after many years, in images of long delicious strolls, in musing loneliness, through the deserted ways of

the ancient city ; of climbings among its hills, over ruins, to reach some vantage ground for mapping the subjacent territory, and looking beyond on the glorious chains of greater and lesser mountains, clad in their imperial hues of gold and purple ; and then perhaps of solemn entrance into the cool solitude of an open basilica, where your thought now rests, as your body then did, after the silent evening prayer, and brings forward from many well-remembered nooks, every local inscription, every lovely monument of art, the characteristic feature of each, or the great names with which it is associated. The Liberian speaks to you of Bethlehem and its treasured mysteries ; the Sessorian of Calvary and its touching relics. Baronius gives you his injunctions on Christian architecture inscribed, as a legacy, in his title of Fasciola ; St. Dominic lives, in the fresh paintings of a faithful disciple<sup>1</sup>, on the walls of the opposite church of St. Xystus ; there stands the chair, and there hangs the hat of St. Charles, as if he had just left his own church, from which he calls himself, in his signature to letters, "The Cardinal of St. Praxedes ;" near it, in a sister church, is fresh the memory of St. Justin Martyr,

<sup>1</sup> Père Besson.

in whose hand crackles the parchment of some old dingy volume, whose turn has come of the many around him, to be what is called collated, a verb that has no connection with its analogous substantive. Perhaps, at the moment of a delightful discovery, that the dusky membranaceous document has, in a certain spot, a preposition or even a letter different from three companions, there enters silently a man of middle age, with lofty brow, and deep set eyes, happy in the loose drapery of home in summer—for he lives among books—and sits him down beside the solitary learner. Kind and encouraging words, useful practical information, perhaps a discussion on some interesting point, make a quarter of an hour's diversion from the "weight of the day and the heat;" but coming from or shared with the discoverer of Cicero and Fronto, of Isocrates and Dionysius, they may become the beginning of a long cherished and valued friendship. Hours like these, often repeated, pass not away lightly from the memory. Spent under the very shadow of the great dome, they endear Rome by the recollection of solid profit thus gained and garnered for the evil days of busier life. Any one, surely, whose years of mental cultivation can thus associate themselves, must retain a happy and a grateful impression on mind and heart.

Thus far, the chapter has been very rambling, and possibly it will continue somewhat of the same character. The difficulty, in fact, of the present task increases most sensibly at this point. It is that of personal contact and more familiar intimacy with those of whom it treats. It is that which matures into close observation, actual experience, sensible enjoyment, the acquaintance with qualities only viewed from a distance with reverence till now. The circumstances under which they were learned and felt come so thoroughly home to their recorder, that he must shrink from the undue prominence into which he is obliged to thrust himself to give them reality ; and hence there is no other alternative but that of suppression of what would be most lifelike, because most confidential. To explain this, it may be briefly stated, that this short Pontificate formed the decisive æra in the writer's life, that pivot on which its future, long or short, was to turn. Every one has such a date to look back upon ; so there is nothing wonderful in this. It merely happened in his case that, having finished his studies at an early period, he was found to be at hand in 1826, when some one was wanted for the office of Vice-Rector, and so was named to it. And in 1828, when the truly worthy Rector, Dr. Gradwell,



was appointed Bishop, he was, by almost natural sequence, named to succeed him.

These official positions necessarily gave rise to more frequent opportunities, and an occasional obligation, of approaching the person of the Sovereign. For in Rome such access is easy, and almost indispensable for persons holding an ecclesiastical situation of responsibility. And in the instance alluded to, there is attached to the headship of the college an agency of English ecclesiastical affairs, which, though mainly conducted through ministerial channels, involves from time to time good reason for addressing the Pope in person. As a general recollection of these frequent audiences, it may be simply stated, that they were uniformly condescending, fatherly, and most amiably conducted in look and speech. It required some restraint on oneself not to be too familiar. However insignificant the occasion or the person, there was always the same benignant interest shown, as if both had been invested with a much higher character.

Let us take a trivial example ; one alluded to in our second chapter. A student has reached the conclusion of his studies, and is thought by his superiors, for it can never be a matter of personal choice, able to claim his degree by public challenge against all comers, who dare

impugn any of his propositions. To the honour of the English College be it said, that, from time to time, one or other of its sons has hung up his shield, and stood bravely against his adversaries. Let us take for an example one of these ; and probably to many readers of this sketchy narrative an account of the proceedings may be new. The youth selected will have ordinary power of application and memory, will not be too bashful or timid, must possess a fair amount of tact, and a readiness, if possible a fluency, in the use of the Latin language, not merely in its classical construction, but also in its scholastic and more barbaric technologies. He prints in a goodly quarto his *thesis*, which must not contain fewer than a hundred points, but which probably his professors may carry up to four times that, embracing the entire field of Catholic theology. This little volume is circulated among friends, and an invitation is sent to every ecclesiastical establishment in Rome ; day and hour and place being specified, with the usual clauses, that in the morning “*datur omnibus*,” all may attack, while in the afternoon the same liberty is granted only after three well-selected champions shall have broken their lances.

When the time comes, the respondent finds himself, he hardly knows how, seated behind a

table at the end of an immense hall, which it requires a sustained voice to fill, supported by his professors, who may edge in a word at his ear, in case of possible straits. A huge oval chain of chairs stretches down the room, on either side, and soon begins to be occupied by professors, doctors, and learned men, of whom he has heard perhaps only in awe ; each of whom receives a copy of the thesis, and cons it over, as if to find the weak point between the plates of mail, into which he will later try to thrust his spear. I remember well, in the particular instance before my eye, that a monk clothed in white glided in, and sat down in the inner circle, but though a special messenger was despatched to him by the professors, he shook his head, and declined becoming an assailant. He had been sent to listen and report. It was F. Cappellari, who in less than six years was Pope Gregory XVI. Not far from him was seated the Abbé de la Mennais, whose works he so justly and so witheringly condemned. Probably it was the only time that they were ever seated together, listening to an English youth vindicating the faith, of which one would become the oracle, and the other the bitter foe.

Well, now some one rises, and in measured language, eloquently addresses a few encouraging

sentences to his young competitor, whose heart is beating in anxious uncertainty on what side he will be assailed ; till a period is rounded off, by the declaration of the number in his propositions about to be impugned. A crackling sound of stiff paper turning simultaneously in every hand, through the hall filled with students, religious, and auditors lay and clerical, announces universal eagerness to see the selected theme, and relieves the tension of the pilloried youth, who, for the first time in his life finds himself painfully conspicuous, and feels the weight of past labour and of future responsibility both pressing on his head.

Of course he has prepared himself thoroughly ; and his wretchedness must be double, if he have left a vulnerable spot in his armour, or if it be not all of proof. Of course he knows that no assailant can "travel out of the record," or put such questions to him as Sir T. More did to the disputant "*in omni scibili et de quolibet ente*," whom he stumbled upon somewhere abroad, and thoroughly nonplussed by a most lucid query of English law ; to wit, "*Utrum averia carucæ in vetito namio capta sint irreplegiabilia*." <sup>1</sup> Still

<sup>1</sup> In vernacular : "Whether beasts of the plough, taken in withernam, are capable of being replevied."—*Blackstone*, iii. 9.

there are subjects on which one is better got up than others, and there are some more interesting, more full of detail, and more suitable for a lively illustration. However there is no remedy; drily or unctuously, logically or eloquently, he must leave nothing unnoticed; he may turn the flank of something new, if it come unexpectedly before him; but, on the whole, he must show that he has overlooked no point worth answering. The assailants are keen practised gladiators, who, if they are satisfied of the defendant's prowess, will give him fair opportunity for its display. To this the writer must plead guilty; he has done his best to try the metal of such young combatants striving to win their spurs. But when he has had such men as the Archbishop of Dublin or of Thyana<sup>1</sup>, or the Bishops of Pittsburg or Clifton to attack, he has had no occasion to repent having well tempered his weapons, and weighted his blows.

After some hours of this digladiation comes a pause for refecton and repose, for every one but the champion of the day; who is probably crushed by a leaden sick-headache, in which his past performance looks a wretched failure, and his coming one a dark and dismal uncertainty. It

<sup>1</sup> Mgr. Barrili, just consecrated, and named Nuncio to Madrid.

arrives however, and he is, this time, perched up in a tall pulpit, with his professors low in front of him, hopelessly beyond reach for rescue and succour. He is in the centre of one side of the nave of a lofty church, which not only adds solemnity and even religious awe to his position, but makes it necessary that his voice should ring clearly, in an almost declamatory tone, to reach the opposite side, where, on a dais, in a chair of state, sits the Cardinal who has accepted the dedication of the disputation. It had been intended, in the case before us, to request the Sovereign Pontiff to bestow the honour of his patronage ; but, at the last moment, this idea was abandoned. However, the inner circle was sufficiently formidable ; one patriarch, four archbishops, at least half a dozen bishops, about twenty prelates, not a few of whom have since reached the highest honours of the Church, nearly as many professors, abbots and rectors, and an immense crowd of persons even of equal rank, out of full dress ; which being required in the inner circle, gives it the appearance almost of a synod.

Now, when this is over, what is the great reward looked forward to by the young athlete, beyond the title of the theological doctorate obtained, but in Rome not borne ? It is to proceed

next day, with a suitably bound copy of the "Thesis," to the Sovereign Pontiff, and lay it at his feet. Not only does he receive a loving paternal blessing; but his cheeks glow and his heart beats as he bends beneath the expressions of the kindest encouragement, and even words of praise. He will find the common father, of little as of great, already informed of the proceedings of yesterday, of any peculiar incident, some clever hit, some blundering objicient's courteous overthrow, whatever had been characteristic in manner or in method. And then he is exhorted to persevere in study, and to cultivate the gifts which God has given him, to His glory. Perhaps even more is said;—a particular direction is pointed out, resulting from the success of the preliminary specimen; to study assiduously Holy Scripture, or the Fathers, or the questions of the day. All this used to be done by Leo, with a sweetness and emboldening graciousness, which would compensate to a youth any amount of labour undergone, for enrolment in such a prince's spiritual and theological army. It raised him above himself and his own pusillanimous thoughts, made him, for the first time, hope that he might live to do some good, and opened his eyes to the brighter and more cheerful side of his own insignificant existence.

Such looks, such words, such a scene, are not easily forgotten ; and who knows for how much of sterling worth, and enduring work, the Church may be indebted to a single quarter of an hour thus bestowed on the tender, warm, and impassionable mind of a youth, accompanied by a benediction full of grace, and proceeding from one whom he reveres and deeply honours, as God's very representative on earth ? The seal is set and pressed deep upon the wax, just at the moment that it is the warmest and the softest ; it would be wonderful if the impression be not sharp and lasting. In the tempering of steel, after much manipulation, it is said that all the finest blades pass through the hands of one superior workman ; who, by some secret skill and consummate tact, with a few strokes imparts a finish and delicacy that prepare them for the keenest edge. And so, after years of study and secret toil, a patient student may, in a few moments, receive what Milton calls " a touch of celestial temper," from the master-hand in the ecclesiastical armoury.

To have witnessed more than once such scenes has certainly left that strong impression, and confirmed all that has already been said in this volume, of the particular kindness with which Leo XII. always treated those of our college



who approached him, especially in connection with study. There will be further occasion to exemplify this assertion.

But one demonstration of his interest in that establishment is but little known. He had conceived a plan similar to that lately carried out by the present large-minded and munificent Pontiff, of extending the English College, and making it a place of prolonged education for students who might wish to attend the higher courses of the University. Annexed to the house is a large *Palazzo*, or residence let out in apartments, and built mainly by Cardinal Howard. The Pope commissioned Monsignor Nicolai, well known among the learned for a magnificent folio on St. Paul's Basilica, and a very able practical work on the drainage of the Pontine marshes which he had superintended, quietly to inspect these buildings, ascertain the rent which they yielded, and the necessary outlay to be incurred by the proposed plan ; also, the additional funds requisite for endowment, to carrying it permanently out. For he desired that no loss should fall upon the college, but that rather it should reap complete advantage. However, death came prematurely to prevent the execution of these generous intentions, which were afterwards learned from Nicolai himself.

## CHAPTER VI.

## CONTINUATION.

THE instance of great interest and kindness alluded to, towards the close of the last chapter, was one which afforded the writer many opportunities of noting the undeviating goodness of heart which characterised this Pontiff. It so happened, that a person connected with the English College was an aspirant to a chair in the Roman University. He had been encouraged to compete for it, on its approaching vacancy, by his professors. Having no claims of any sort, by interest or connection, he stood simply on the provision of the papal bull, which threw open all professorships to competition. It was but a secondary and obscure lectureship at best, one concerning which it was supposed few would busy themselves, or come forward as candidates. It was, therefore, announced that this rule would be overlooked, and a person every way qualified,

and of considerable reputation, would be named. The more youthful aspirant unhesitatingly solicited an audience, at which I was present. He told the Pope frankly of his intentions, and of his earnest wish to have carried out, in his favour, the recent enactments of His Holiness. Nothing could be more affable, more encouraging, than Leo's reply. He expressed his delight at seeing that his regulation was not a dead letter, and that it had animated his petitioner to exertion. He assured him that he should have a fair chance, "a clear stage and no favour," desiring him to leave the matter in his hands.

Time wore on ; and as the only alternative given in the Bull was, proof, by publication of a work, of proficiency in the art or science that was to be taught, he quietly got a volume through the press, probably very heavy ; but sprightliness or brilliancy was not a condition of the Bull. When a vacancy arrived, it was made known, together with the announcement that it had been filled up. All seemed lost, except the honour of the Pontiff, to which alone lay any appeal. Another audience was asked, and instantly granted, its motive being of course stated. I was again present, and shall not easily forget it. It was not necessary to restate the case. "I

remember it all," the Pope said most kindly. "I have been surprised. I have sent for C——, through whom this has been done; I have ordered the appointment to be cancelled, and I have reproved him so sharply, that I believe it is the reason why he is laid up to-day with fever. You have acted fairly and boldly, and you shall not lose the fruits of your industry. I will keep my word with you, and the provisions of my constitution." With the utmost graciousness he accepted the volume, now treasured by its author, into whose hands the copy has returned, acknowledged the right to preference which it had established, and assured its author of fair play.

The Pope had, in fact, taken up earnestly the cause of his youthful appellant; instead of annoyance, he showed earnestness and kindness; and those who had passed over his pretensions with contempt were obliged to treat with him, and compromise with him on terms that satisfied all his desires. Another audience for thanksgiving was kindly accorded, and I witnessed the same gentle and fatherly temper, quietly cheerful, and the same earnest sympathy with the feelings of him whose cause had been so graciously carried through. If this young client gained no new energies, gathered no strength from such re-

peated proofs of interest and condescension, if these did not both direct and impel, steer and fill the sails of his little bark, through many troubled waters,—nay, if they did not tinge and savour his entire mental life, we may write that man soulless, and incapable of any noble emotions.

The kindness, however, of Pope Leo XII. for our national establishment was not confined to considerate acts towards individuals; but he gave us all an unexpected proof of his singular condescension. I have already described the villa of the college, where the vintage season is passed, half urban, half rural, unpretending in its size and accommodation, still more so in its architecture; for it is only a conglomeration of small houses. In fine, chiefly the view and position, in addition to the pleasant things there done, render it the very delight, the centre-point of affections, of every Roman student. Certes, if one who commands free choice wished to spend the day in that neighbourhood, there are stately villas, and noble convents, all round the place, to tempt him to them.

Leo, still afflicted with many infirmities, never went far into the country. He had fitted up a small villa, what one might call, if not irreverent, “a box,” three or four miles from Rome, whither

he used to retire with his attendants, to pass a few hours in the vineyard that surrounds it. He had loved innocent sporting when a young man; and it used to be said that the quiet enjoyment of his old recreation was sometimes agreeable to him. Be that as it may, no recent Pontiff has been so completely a stay-at-home as he; and the papal villa at Castel Gendolfo was never, I believe, occupied by him. It could not, therefore, have been a mere love of excursion, or of locomotion, that would have drawn him into the Tusculan hills.

It was in the autumnal vacation of 1827, that certain preparations, of ominous import, attracted the attention of the students: loads of collegiate attire, furniture, and hangings arrived mysteriously, and were put aside; cleansing and painting commenced vigorously at a most inconvenient period; and then a supply, apparently superfluous, of gallinacæ, cackling and gobbling, arrived, no one knew whence, with a truly fatted calf from the great Borghese farm of Pantano, which, it was whispered, had been bespoken some time before by an officer of the royal buttery. Rumours began to be afloat; yet no one dared to expect so unusual an honour as they bespoke for the little village. Only two persons were in the secret, the Rector and his Vice-

rector, besides those engaged in the preparations. But it was strictly enjoined and faithfully kept, till it was necessary to give orders for repairing the roads, cleaning the streets, erecting triumphal arches, and hanging out tapestries, in which arts of adornment Italian villages are singularly expert. In fact, illuminations, fireworks, and a balloon, were added quickly to our preparations.

The culinary department was transferred from the simpler dispensations of the college cook to the more scientific operations of a courtly manipulator, and a banquet began to be prepared, the provider of which could no longer remain concealed. Yet, so strict were the precautions taken to observe secrecy, and prevent any concourse of people, that the highest officers of the household were kept in complete ignorance of the Pope's intentions. For, early on the 29th of October, there drove up to the house the Maggiordomo and Maestro di Camera (afterwards Cardinals Marazzani and Barberini), and asked why they had been sent thither? They had merely been told to drive in the morning to the Lateran gate, where they received a note directing them to proceed to the English villa at Monte Porzio. Great was their astonishment at learning that His Holiness was expected in a few hours. And,

in like manner, we were under strict injunctions to admit no one into the house, and invite no guest, as the visit was strictly to the college. Indeed this the Pope again and again repeated, when deputations wished to approach him.

The morning was wet, and caused us much uneasiness, till, towards ten, the sun shone brightly, the clouds rolled away, and every eye was intent on the road from Frascati, the Roman approach. Leaning over the garden wall, one saw into the deep valley along which it ran, now in long straight avenues, now diving and turning through dells, almost smothered in the vineyards, till the olive garden of the lordly but desolate palace of Mandragone cut short the view on earth and sky. Suddenly, at the farthest point of vision, some one declared that he had seen a gleam of helmet or of sword, through the elms, and was hardly believed; till another and another flashed on many straining eyes. Then the tramp of many horses, at full speed, was heard; and at last, along one of the level reaches of the road, came into sight the whole *cortége*, — noble guards and dragoons galloping hard to keep up with the papal carriage and its six smoking sable steeds. Soon all was lost to eye and ear, as the cavalcade wound round and up the steep acclivity on which



we were placed, then it rolled for a moment through the gateway of the village, and finally, after rattling through its narrow streets, pulled up before the house. The Pope alighted, gave his blessing to all around him, then walked to the public church, and made his prayer of adoration. He thence proceeded on foot to a neat house in the little square, from the balcony of which he blessed the assembled inhabitants; and where he received most affably the more respectable villagers.

After this, we had him all to ourselves: for dinner-time soon arrived. By strictest etiquette, the Sovereign Pontiff never has any one to dine with him in his palace. Not even a sovereign is ever admitted there to hospitality. During the genial month of October, there is so far a relaxation from this rule, that entertainments are given out of the papal apartments, sometimes in an elegant pavilion in the Vatican garden. And, during that season of the year, the Pope visits monasteries or other institutions out of Rome, where, on account of distance, a repast is prepared for him, of which the inmates partake. But, even so, the rule is observed of his dining alone. A small table is placed at the head of the guests' table, raised just perceptibly above its level, by means of a low step, at which he sits alone,

though scarcely removed from the rest of the party.<sup>1</sup>

It was thus that Leo XII. was situated, on the memorable day of his visit to Monte Porzio. The table was laid for him with elegance and simplicity; there was no display, no plate, no attempt to be more than things and persons were. We were in a college refectory, we were simple English superiors and students. The rest of the table was covered with the plain requisites for the meat and drink which supplied our ordinary repast. The refectory was a low oblong room, at the end of which, opposite the Pope, a large window opened to the ground, and was filled up, as though it had been a glowing picture, by a green sloping mountain, with vineyard below, chestnut and cypress above, and rich green

<sup>1</sup> A short time ago, when the Pope was at Florence, the English Minister left it, and returned home suddenly. There was sufficient obvious reason for this in the serious illness of a brother, whose dying hours he was summoned to attend. This, however, was not a satisfactory reason for a newspaper correspondent, who assigned, as the true motive, that our envoy had been insulted by not being placed at the same table as the Pope. Perhaps the custom mentioned in the text may explain the *fact*, which the writer got hold of, and manufactured into one of those stories supplied by such persons to throw discredit on the glorious progress of the Pontiff through Italy. Both he and the Grand-Duke of Tuscany are as incapable of offering a gratuitous insult to a foreign envoy, as Lord N. is of considering himself insulted by the observance of established court rules. At any rate, we have heard no more of this great diplomatic case.

pasture joining them to the azurest of skies. The first observation which the Pope made was one not a little flattering to his English guests. "It is seldom," he said, "that a poor Pope can enjoy the pleasure of sitting down to dinner with such a fine set of young men." And truly the party did no dishonour to the bracing air which they first breathed on earth, either by complexion, by stature, or by sinewy build. How are they now scattered, above the earth and beneath it! Several worthily fill episcopal chairs, many are labouring, with meritorious industry, in the ecclesiastical field; too large a proportion have reached their hour of rest. However, on that day all were blithe and happy, joyful and jocund, under their Father's smile and kindly looks. For the Pope ate scarcely anything, and barely tasted drink. But he would employ his leisure in carving, and sending down the dishes from his own table; while his conversation was familiar, and addressed to all. He told us how he spent his day, partly by way of apology for seeming to partake so sparingly of the fare before him. He rose very early, perhaps at five; and spent the first part of the day as any other Catholic ecclesiastic does, in those religious duties which have to consecrate its actions, — meditation, prayer, and the celebration of the Divine

Mysteries, followed always, in the Pope's diary, by assisting at a second mass "of thanksgiving" said by a chaplain. A cup of coffee, or a basin of broth, with no solid food, was all the sustenance which he took till his hour of dinner. He went through the morning work of audiences, from eight, at latest, till twelve; then retired for private occupation, rested, devoted an hour to prayer (as we learned from others), drove out, and resumed public business till ten, when he took his first and only meal. To say that it was frugal would be little; nor could we wonder at the accredited report that he would not allow his personal expenses to exceed a dollar a day, when we heard from his own lips that the dry Newfoundland stock-fish, the *baccalà* of Italy, was his very ordinary and favourite food.

This abstemiousness enabled Leo to go through functions which no other Pope in modern times has attempted, such as singing mass at Santa Maria Maggiore on Christmas Eve, which involved fasting from the previous midnight, at least three and twenty hours, then going to St. Anastasia's Church, the "Station" for the mass at dawn; after saying which, he sang the third mass at St. Peter's on the day itself.

To proceed, however; after our cheerful meal,

the Pope retired into the Rector's bed-room, where he reposed for a short time; then came into his modest sitting-room, where we again gathered around him, in familiar conversation, till the hour of his departure. He would not sit on the gold and damask chair prepared for him, but took possession of an ordinary one, with a rush seat, where he gave audience also to the good clergy of the village, able though plain, and certainly most disinterested, men; who, living chiefly on their own patrimonies, performed well the subsidiary duties which a solitary rector could not have adequately fulfilled. I remember well the questions which he asked, and some peculiar advice which he gave of quite a local nature.

The simple events of that day may appear trifling to many readers, who are accustomed to look upon the Pope as only an object of a peculiar class of feelings, veering between the bitter and the sour. They forget that he is, at any rate, a sovereign; and one may presume that, if there existed an English "educational establishment" connected with Protestantism in even a small state, such as Baden or Sardinia, and the ruler of that state were to go, and give the boys a day to themselves, dining in their hall, it would be considered a very gracious act, and perhaps a

national compliment; at least, a mark of his respect for the people to which it belonged. The ecclesiastical Sovereign of Rome, too, is considered, popularly, as living in almost inaccessible state, and not easily drawn into familiar contact with others. Surely, then, it is no wonder that such an act of condescension endeared Leo to those who experienced it, unasked from him, foreigners though they were, and of a nation which had shown little of that sympathy with him which it had lavished on his predecessor. But to their eyes such a visit was much more than one from a lesser sovereign. His ecclesiastical elevation, his spiritual principality, his religious character, make his worldly position only secondary in him, and give him a precedence in the hierarchy of monarchs, which the possessors of wider territories and of heavier budgets will not deny. An act of paternal condescension from one so considered, such as has been described, could not fail to remain engraven on the hearts of all who witnessed, or rather experienced it. They wished their successors also to keep it before their minds; and therefore had the memory of this kindness graven upon something less perishable than those fleshly tablets, upon two handsome marble slabs, one in the college, and one in the hall so highly honoured, varying

only in the designation of place. The following is a copy of the first:—

HONORI  
 —  
 LEONIS XII. PONT. MAX.  
 OPTIMI . ET . INDVLGENTISSIMI . PRINCIPIS  
 —  
 QVOD IV. KAL. NOV. AN. MDCCCXXVIII.  
 ALVMNOS . COLLEGII . ANGLORVM  
 PORTIONVNI . RVSTICANTES  
 LIBENS . INVISERIT  
 IN . CONVIVIVM . ADHIBVERIT  
 OMNIQVE . COMITATE . COMPLEXVS . SIT  
 ROBERTVS . GRADWELL . RECTOR . COLLEGII  
 ET . IIDEM . ALVMNI  
 V.E. FLACIDO . ZVELA . CARD. PATRONO . SVFFRAGANTE  
 DEVOTI . GRATIQVE . ANIMI . MONVMENTVM  
 DEDICAVERVNT .

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE ENGLISH CARDINALATE.

ALTHOUGH it was his successor Pius VIII. who first, in modern times, created an English Cardinal, the idea of doing so arose in the mind of Leo XII. under circumstances of a peculiar nature. It is a common practice for a cardinal, on being raised to the pontifical chair, to "restore the hat," as it is called, by raising to the dignity, from which he has himself just risen, some member of the family of the Pope who had elevated him to that honour. And if that Pontiff had belonged to a religious body, it would, or might be, restored to his order.

Now Leo XII. had been created Cardinal by Pius VII., who was member of the Benedictine order; and he wished to discharge his duty of gratitude towards that venerable corporation. In the winter of 1826 there arrived in Rome the Right Rev. Dr. Baines, Bishop of Siga, and Coadjutor of the English Western District. He



came in a state of almost hopeless illness, with an interior abscess working on an enfeebled frame and constitution, apparently unable to expel it from the system. He came merely as a visitor, with some private friends who had kindly accompanied him, in hopes that change of climate might do more than medicines or their administrators. They were not deceived. The mild climate, the interesting recreation, and perhaps more still, the rest from the labour and excitement in which he had lived, did their duty; at some due period, the interior enemy capitulated, in that Englishman's stronghold of misery and pain—the liver; and a visible change for the better was observable by spring. A delightful summer spent between Assisi and Porto di Fermo completed the task; and he used to recount, on his return, the astonishment of the simple rustics among whom he had lived, at receiving payments by a strip of paper, with a few lines upon it, as illegible to them as a doctor's prescription is to more educated people, which, upon being presented at a certain palazzo in the neighbouring city, they found, to their amazement, unhesitatingly converted into the exact amount due to them, in clearly ringing coin.

By degrees the reputation which he had acquired in England began to spread in Rome;

several noble families in which he had been intimate at home were in Rome, and gave many others the opportunity of becoming acquainted with him; and he had a power of fascinating all who approached him, in spite of a positive tone and manner which scarcely admitted of difference from him in opinion. He had sometimes original views upon a certain class of subjects; but on every topic he had a command of language, and a clear manner of expressing his sentiments, which commanded attention, and generally won assent. Hence his acquaintances were always willing listeners, and soon became sincere admirers, then warm partisans. Unfortunately, this proved to him a fatal gift. When he undertook great and even magnificent works, he would stand alone: assent to his plans was the condition of being near him; any one that did not agree, or that ventured to suggest deliberation, or provoke discussion, was soon at a distance; he isolated himself with his own genius, he had no counsellor but himself; and he who had, at one time, surrounded himself with men of learning, of prudence, and of devotedness to him, found himself at last alone, and fretted a noble heart to a solitary death.

At the period, however, to which this chapter belongs, these faults could scarcely show them-

selves to any great disparagement of his higher and better powers. In the course of the ensuing winter he was able, though contrary to the opinion of his friends, to appear in the English pulpit, which, as we shall see, Leo XII. opened in Rome. The church, which was nearly empty when preachers of inferior mark occupied it, was crowded when Bishop Baines was announced as the orator. Many people will remember him. He was happiest in his unwritten discourses. The flow of his words was easy and copious, his imagery was often very elegant, and his discourses were replete with thought and solid matter. But his great power was in his delivery, in voice, in tone, in look, and gesture. His whole manner was full of pathos, sometimes more even than the matter justified; there was a peculiar tremulousness of voice, which gave his words more than double effect, notwithstanding a broadness of provincial accent, and an occasional dramatic pronunciation of certain words. In spite of such defects, he was considered, by all that heard him, one of the most eloquent and earnest preachers they had ever attended.

Such was the person destined, in the mind of Leo, to be the first English cardinal. The fact was, that Dr. Baines was a Benedictine, brought up in the Abbey of Lambspring, and before his

episcopal promotion Prior of Ampleforth in Yorkshire. We were informed by Monsignor Nicolai, that the Pope had called him, and said to him, "that he had been casting his eyes around him for a member of the Benedictine body, on whom to bestow the hat of restitution; many worthy men in it were too aged and infirm, others too young, so that he had fixed upon the English monk, if, on inquiry, his character should prove equal to the proposed elevation." Such inquiries were made, in good measure amongst us, without their object being communicated. The result was, that the bishop was desired to remove from the private apartments in the Palazzo Costa, where he had been living with his English friends, to the Benedictine monastery of San Callisto, and to wear the episcopal habit of his order.

The death of the Pope alone prevented the consummation of this plan; his successor, who probably had not heard of it, selected a very old Benedictine Abbot, Crescini, from Parma, to receive the hat, which he, as well as Leo, owed to Pius VII. It was indeed, given, but not enjoyed, for the good religious, who was quite worthy otherwise of his honours, died either on his journey, or immediately on his arrival at home.

It is evident, however, that Dr. Baines would have been made a Cardinal, not on national grounds, but as a Benedictine. Still the thought of travelling so far, to find a fitting member of that body for the dignity, was generous and broad in Leo. And, besides, there can be no doubt, that this intention was made the basis of the nomination of an English Cardinal, in the ensuing Pontificate.

Gladly would this subject be ended here ; it is not a matter of choice, but almost of necessity to pursue it further. While it is matter of absolute certainty, that Leo had made up his mind to name Bishop Baines a member of the cardinalitial college, had he ever turned his thoughts towards another of our countrymen, so far as outward manifestations can warrant us in saying so ? Such an act would have exhibited nothing unreasonable in itself ; though certainly the sudden creation of two English cardinals might have been unexpected. Leo XII. was not the man to mind that ; and if Dr. Baines had been created as the representative of the Benedictine body, Dr. Lingard might well have been so, on his own high merits, and as a reward for his splendid history. Indeed, no one will venture to say, that in the whole range of modern literature, or in the annals of the British clergy, there

is a name that could have been more worthily inscribed, or would have shone more brightly, on the roll of Roman dignitaries, than that of Lingard. An acquaintance begun with him under the disadvantage of ill-proportioned ages, when the one was a man and the other a child, had led me to love and respect him, early enough to leave many years after in which to test the first impressions of simpler emotions, and find them correctly directed, and most soundly based. Mr. Lingard was vice-president of the college which I entered at eight years of age, and I have retained upon my memory the vivid recollection of specific acts of thoughtful and delicate kindness, which showed a tender heart mindful of its duties, amidst the many harassing occupations just devolved on him, through the death of the president, and his own literary engagements; for he was reconducting his first great work through the press. But though he went from college soon after, and I later left the country, and saw him not again for fifteen years, yet there grew up an indirect understanding first, and by degrees a correspondence, and an intimacy which continued to the close of his life. Personally, there was much kind encouragement in pursuits, and in views of public conduct; then, what is a more valuable evidence of regard, the mooted occasional

points of difference for discussion, and from time to time "notes and queries" for information to be obtained, often formed the peculiar links of epistolary communication between us. Then, no one could approach him, and not be charmed by the prevalent temperament of his mind. A buoyancy, a playfulness, and a simplicity of manner and conversation; an exquisite vein of satirical and critical humour, incapable of causing pain to any reasonable mind; a bending and pliant genius, which could adapt itself to every society, so as to become its idol, made him as much at home with the bar of the Northern Circuit, in the days of Brougham and Scarlett<sup>1</sup>, as with the young collegian who called to consult him at Hornby on some passage of Scripture or a classic. But a soundness of judgment and a high tone of feeling, united to solid and varied learning, strong faith, and sincere piety, supplied the deep concrete foundation on which rested those more elegant and airy external graces. Such was Lingard to all who knew him, sure to be loved, if only known. Hence, though he never aspired to ecclesiastical honours at home, and his friends respected him too highly to thrust them upon him against his

<sup>1</sup> The Bar presented him, by subscription, with his own portrait.

desire, it will never be known till his life is really written, and his correspondence published, what a great share he had in the direction of our ecclesiastical affairs in England, and how truly he was almost the oracle which our bishops consulted in matters of intricate or delicate importance. His works alone, however, will secure him his true place with posterity.

That such a man should have received the highest honours, should have been placed and have stood on a level with a Mai or a Gerdil, a Baronius or a Norris, could not have astonished the literary or ecclesiastical world. It would have been "*plaudente Orbe*" that he would have received his elevation. And it is most certainly true, that had mere merit always to decide relative positions, he *ought* to have been what others were or are; but we must say of this lesser dignity what the gentle Metastasio makes one of his heroes, rather impertinently we must own, proclaim of the imperial state to his liege lord, not used to brook such sayings:

"Se

Regnasse sol chi è di regnar capace,  
Forse Arbace era Serse, e Serse Arbace."

This, however, is not our question. Of Dr. Lingard's deserts there is no second opinion.



Nor is it at all necessary to throw doubts upon what is stated in the only meagre biography yet published of him, that Leo XII. proposed to him to settle in Rome, nor on the inductions drawn from the conversation.<sup>1</sup> Of the first it is quite evidence enough, if Dr. Lingard wrote it himself to a friend. But the question, strange as it may sound, is really—"Was Dr. Lingard actually a cardinal?"

In the biography alluded to is the following passage: "At a creation of cardinals in the following year, (Leo) informed the Consistory that among those whom he had reserved *in petto* for the same dignity was one, 'a man of great talents, an accomplished scholar, whose writings, drawn *ex authenticis fontibus*, had not only rendered great service to religion, but had delighted and astonished Europe.' In Rome this was generally understood to refer to the historian of England."

When the Pope made this speech it must have been in this form: "Moreover, *we create a car-*

<sup>1</sup> A conversation, related as having taking place between the Pope and the historian, in Surtees's "History of Durham," may be fairly put down as legendary at the best. Again, the Pope gives gold medals to many besides cardinals. The present Pope sent a gold medal to Mrs. Chisholm, to mark his sense of her great services to emigrants. On this subject also I can speak from experience; this mark of honour to Dr. Lingard has no specific meaning.

dinal of the Holy Roman Church, 'a man of great talents, etc.,' whom, however, we reserve *in pectore*." He cannot reserve the creation of a person, but only his promulgation; and this is so truly the case, that if, ten years later, the Pontiff publishes a person as cardinal, declaring him to be the person so reserved, his cardinalate dates from the first epoch, and he takes at once precedence of all created in the interval. If, therefore, Dr. Lingard was the person meant by the Pope on the occasion referred to in the foregoing extract, the English historian was truly and really created a cardinal.

If so, what prevented his proclamation? The biography goes on to say that Dr. Lingard took steps to prevent it. Is this possible? Is it consistent with his delicate modesty and sensitive abhorrence of praise from a child, to imagine that he at once took to himself this description of the reserved cardinal? But the fact is, that such reservation is a matter of the strictest secrecy, truly confined to the papal breast; not even the person who "draws up the allocution" has an inkling of it more than others, who can judge of the person by the qualities or actions attributed to him. These are often definite. The idea, however, of "Monsignor Testa," or any one else about the Pope, presuming to decide

1824, and had been received with the most marked distinction by the Pope. He was then in all the splendour of his genius, arrayed on the side not only of faith, but of the highest Roman principles. The boldness of his declarations on doctrine, the independence of his tone in politics, the brilliancy of his style, and the depth of thought which it clothed, put him at the head of religious champions in France. He had undauntedly assaulted the flying rear of the great revolution, the indifference which lingered still behind it, by his splendid "*Traité sur l'Indifférence en Matière de Religion*;" he had next endeavoured to beat back from reoccupying its place what he considered had led to that fatal epoch and its desolating results, a kingly Gallicism. This he had done by a treatise less popular, indeed, but full of historical research and clearness of reasoning: "*La Doctrine de l'Eglise sur l'Institution des Evêques*."

It was to this work that Pope Leo was considered to allude. The text of the allocution is not accessible; but it was thought to refer to this work with sufficient point. So matter of fact was the book, so completely the fruit of reading and study, rather than of genius and intellectual prowess, that it has been attributed to a worthy brother, who survives the more bril-

liant meteor now passed away, in a steady and useful light. He is the founder of an immense body of religious brethren, who have their head-quarters at Ploërmel, but are scattered all through Northern France, devoted to the education of the poor.

Be this as it may, the more celebrated brother has his name on the titlepage, and had well-nigh won its honours. And then he was gathering round him an earnest band, not only of admirers but of followers, so long as he cleaved to truth. Never had the head of a religious school possessed so much of fascinating power to draw the genius, energy, devotedness, and sincerity of ardent youth about him; never did any so well indoctrinate them with his own principles as to make these invincible by even his own powers. He was in this like Tertullian, who, when sound of mind, "prescribed" medicines too potent for the subtle poisons which he dealt out in his heterodox insanity. Both laid their foundations too deep, and made them too strong, to be blasted even by their own mines.

How he did so mightily prevail on others it is hard to say. He was truly in look and presence almost contemptible; small, weakly, without pride of countenance or mastery of eye, without any external grace; his tongue seemed to be the

organ by which, unaided, he gave marvellous utterance to thoughts clear, deep, and strong. Several times have I held long conversations with him, at various intervals, and he was always the same. With his head hung down, his hands clasped before him, or gently moving in one another, in answer to a question he poured out a stream of thought, flowing spontaneous and unrippled as a stream through a summer meadow. He at once seized the whole subject, divided it into its heads, as symmetrically as Fléchier or Massillon; then took them one by one, enucleated each, and drew his conclusions. All this went on in a monotonous but soft tone, and was so unbroken, so unhesitating, and yet so polished and elegant, that, if you had closed your eyes, you might have easily fancied that you were listening to the reading of a finished and elaborately corrected volume.

Then, everything was illustrated by such happy imagery, so apt, so graphic, and so complete. I remember his once describing, in glowing colours, the future prospects of the Church. He had referred to prophecies of Scripture, and fulfilments in history, and had concluded that, not even at the period of Constantine, had perfect accomplishment of predictions and types been made; and that, therefore, a more glorious

phase yet awaited the Church than any she had yet experienced. And this, he thought, could not be far off.

“And how,” I asked, “do you think, or see, that this great and wonderful change in her condition will be brought about?”

“I cannot see,” he replied. “I feel myself like a man placed at one end of a long gallery, at the other extremity of which are brilliant lights, shedding their rays on objects there. I see paintings and sculpture, furniture and persons, clear and distinct; but of what is between me and them I see nothing, the whole interval is dark, and I cannot describe what occupies the space. I can read the consequence, but not the working of the problem.”

On another occasion his answer was more explicit. He had been discoursing eloquently on England, and what had to be done there in our religious struggles. He had described the ways in which prejudices had to be overcome, and public opinion won over. He was asked—

“But what, or where, are the instruments with which such difficult and great things have to be wrought?”

“They do not exist as yet,” he answered. “You must begin there by making the imple-

ments with which your work has to be performed. It is what we are doing in France."

And glorious, indeed, were the weapons that came from that armoury, of finest temper and brightest polish; true as steel, well-balanced and without flaw, were the instruments that issued from that forge; Montalembert, Rio, Cœur, Lacordaire, Cornballot, and many others, who have not failed in the work for which a higher power than that of an earthly teacher had destined them.

But in him there was long a canker deeply sunk. There was a maggot in the very core of that beautiful fruit. When, in 1837, he finished his ecclesiastical career by his "*Affaires de Rome*," the worm had only fully writhed itself out, and wound itself, like the serpent of Eden, round the rind. But it had been there all along. During his last journey to Rome, to which that book referred, he is said to have exclaimed to a companion, setting his teeth, and pressing his clasped hands to his heart: "I feel in here an evil spirit, who will drag me one day to perdition." That day soon came. It was the demon of pride and disappointed ambition. Often has one heard good men say in Rome, what a happy escape the Roman Church had experienced from one who had turned out so worthless! And

others have thought, that, if Leo's intentions had been carried out, the evil spirit would have been thereby exorcised, and, the dross being thus removed, the gold alone would have remained. But when ever was a passion cured by being humoured, or satisfied ?

It is easy to account for Leo's abandonment of his intentions in favour of this wretched man. But how nobly does the character of our Lingard contrast with his, whom the necessity of our task and topic has compelled us to consider by his side ! How sterling and manly, unselfish and consistent, does he appear throughout ! For there can be no doubt that under the assurance of its being made to him, he earnestly recoiled from the offer of that high dignity, which no one surely would accept without shrinking ; though his mind might balance between the examples of a Philip playfully rejecting, and a Baronius obediently receiving.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## CLOSE OF LEO'S PONTIFICATE.

THERE is an act of this papal reign which deserves record as characteristic of the Pontiff himself, and as illustrating the practical working of the supremacy under complications otherwise insoluble. South America had thrown off the Spanish rule, and enjoyed an independence of some years' duration. On the 21st of May, 1827, the Pope addressed the cardinals in Consistory assembled, on the ecclesiastical position of that continent. Spain had refused to recognise the independence of its many states, although it had ceased effectually even to disturb them. It claimed still all its old rights over them ; and, among them, that of episcopal presentation. The exercise of such a power, if it existed, would have been contradictory to its object, and therefore self-defeating. Bishops are intended to feed a flock ; and of what use would bishops have been, who would never have been allowed even to look upon their sees or be heard by their

people ? For it would have been quite unreasonable to expect that the free republics would acknowledge the jurisdiction of the country which declared itself at war with them.

On the other hand, there had been no formal ecclesiastical treaty or concordat between these commonwealths and the Holy See, by which previous claims had been abrogated, and new rights invested in their present rulers. It was just a case for the exercise of the highest prerogative which both parties acknowledged to be inherent in the supremacy, however galling its application might be to one of them. In the allocution alluded to, the Pope announced, that, not feeling justified in longer permitting those sees to remain vacant, and those immense populations wandering like sheep without a shepherd, he had provided them with worthy pastors, without the intervention of either side, but in virtue of his supreme apostolic authority. The Court of Madrid was angry, and refused to admit the Papal Nuncio, Tiberi; and a little episode in the life of the present Pontiff arose from this passing coolness.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pius VII., at the request of Cienfuegos, envoy from Chili, sent as envoy to that republic Mgr. Muzi, and as his assistant the Ab. Mastai, now Pius IX. The Pope dying before the expedition had sailed from Genoa, it was confirmed by Leo XII., who, in his brief, declares that the Count Mastai had been originally appointed by his desire, describing him as "*Nobis apprime charus*." The

The last recollection which shall be recorded of this good and amiable man may be considered too personal ; but it relates to a public expression of his interest in our countrymen. On some occasion or other, it happened that the author accompanied the Rector to an audience of the Pope. This was in 1827. After transacting other business, His Holiness remarked, that there being no English Church in Rome, Catholics who came there had no opportunity of hearing the word of God, and even others who might desire to hear a sermon in their own language, had no means of gratifying their wish. It was therefore, he said, his intention to have, during the winter, in some church well situated, a course of English sermons, to be delivered every Sunday. It was to be attended by all colleges and religious communities that spoke our language. One difficulty remained ; where was the preacher to be found ? The Rector, justly approving of the design, most unjustly pointed to his com-


commissioners sailed Oct. 11th, 1823, but were driven by stress of weather into Palma, the capital of Majorca. Upon ascertaining from their papers who were the ecclesiastics on board, and what their mission, the governor had them arrested, kept them four days in a common prison, subjected them to an ignominious examination in court, and was on the point of sending them to banishment in an African *presidio*, when common sense prevailed, and they were restored to liberty. See a full account in the "Dublin Review," vol. xxxiv. p. 469.

panion, and suggested him ; though, with the exception of such juvenile essays as students blushing deliver before their own companions, he had never addressed an audience.

However, the burthen was laid there and then, with peremptory kindness, by an authority that might not be gainsayed. And crushingly it pressed upon the shoulders : it would be impossible to describe the anxiety, pain, and trouble which this command cost for many years after. Nor would this be alluded to, were it not to illustrate what has been kept in view through this volume, — how the most insignificant life, temper, and mind may be moulded by the action of a great, and almost unconscious, power. Leo could not see what has been the influence of his commission, in merely dragging from the commerce with the dead to that of the living, one who would gladly have confined his time to the former, — from books to men, from reading to speaking. Nothing but this would have done it. Yet supposing that the providence of one's life was to be active, and in contact with the world, and one's future duties were to be in a country and in times where the most bashful may be driven to plead for his religion or his flock, surely a command, over-riding all inclination, and forcing the will to undertake the best

and only preparation for those tasks, may well be contemplated as a sacred impulse, and a timely direction to a mind that wanted both. Had it not come then, it never more could have come ; other bents would have soon become stiffened and unpliant ; and no second opportunity could have been opened, after others had satisfied the first demand. One may therefore feel grateful for the gracious severity of that day, and the more in proportion to what it cost ; for what was then done was spared one later. The weary task to preacher and audience was lightened by the occasional appearance in the pulpit, before alluded to, of the eloquent Dr. Baines, whose *copia fandi* and finished address prevented perhaps the total blight, in infancy, of the Pope's benevolent plan.

He made it, in fact, his own. He selected a church of most just proportions for the work, and of exquisite beauty, that of Gesù e Maria in the Corso ; he had it furnished at his expense each Sunday ; he ordered all charges for advertisements and other costs to be defrayed by the palace, or civil list ; and, what was more useful and considerate than all, a detachment of his own choir attended, to introduce the service by its own peculiar music. Its able director, Canonico Baini, the closest approximator, in



modern times, to Palestrina and Bai, composed a little mottet with English words, for our special use. After this Pontificate the papal choir ceased to afford us help, and a falling off, no doubt, took place in this portion of our offices ; except at times, as when we had the cooperation of a nobleman, then minister at Florence, whose music, under his own direction, was there heard by many with admiration.

An affectionate blessing, and a case containing a gold and a silver medal, were a sufficient reward to the first preachers, at the close of Lent ; but the Pope on Easter Eve sent to the college the materials of a sumptuous feast, of which, immediately on release from penitential discipline, a large and noble party of our countrymen partook.

Fatigued, and almost broken down by new anxious labours and insomnium, I started next day for Naples and Sicily ; travelled round that island when it had yet only twelve miles of carriage road in it ; ascended not only Vesuvius, but to the crater of Etna ; encountered only trifling but characteristic adventures sufficient to amuse friends ; and returned with new vigour home, to find our dear and venerable Rector appointed Bishop, and about to leave Rome for ever.

On the 6th of December, 1828, I received the last mark of kindness and confidence from our Holy Pontiff, in the nomination to the vacated office, and had subsequently my last audience of thanks, fatherly and encouraging as usual. On the table stood, as I had often noticed it, a paper-weight of marble with a silver lion upon it; which caught attention from the trifling circumstance that the back of the noble animal was saddled with several pairs of spectacles, no doubt of different powers. It became interestingly connected with what shortly ensued.

The Pope went through his Christmas duties, and even officiated on the 2nd of February, 1829, the Feast of the Purification, when a *Te Deum* is sung in thanksgiving for escape from a dreadful earthquake in 1703. But between the two festivals he had given intimations of a consciousness of his approaching end. He took leave of Monsignor Testa, his Secretary of Latin Briefs to Princes, at the last weekly audience he had, most affectionately, saying: "A few days more, and we shall not meet again." He gave up the ring usually worn by the Pope to the custody of the Maggiordomo, or High Steward of the Household, telling him, as he hesitated to receive it, that he was its proper guardian, and that it might easily be lost in the confusion of

an event which was shortly to ensue. But the most striking proof of presentiment was the following. Monsignor Gasperini, his Secretary of Latin Letters, went to his usual audience one evening. After despatching his business, Leo said to him, in his ordinary calm and affable manner: "I have a favour to ask of you, which I shall much value."

"Your Holiness has only to command me," was the natural reply.

"It is this," the Pope continued, placing before him a paper. "I have drawn up my epitaph, and I should be obliged to you to correct it, and put it into proper style."

"I would rather have received any commission but that," said the sorrowful secretary, who was deeply attached to his master. "Your Holiness, however, is I trust in no hurry."

"Yes, my dear Gasperini, you must bring it with you next time."

It must be observed that in Italy, and particularly in Rome, much importance is attached to the peculiar purity of style in monumental inscriptions. The "lapidary"<sup>1</sup> style, as it is called, is a peculiar branch of classical com-


<sup>1</sup> From the Italian word *lapide*, which means an inscribed or monumental tablet.



position, confined to a few choice scholars. It differs from ordinary writing, not merely in the use of certain symbols, abbreviations, and set phrases, but much more in the selection of words, in their collocation, and in the absence of all rounded period and expletives, for which clearness, terseness, simplicity of construction, and the absence of a superfluous phrase or word must compensate. Some inscriptions lately proposed for public buildings in this country offend against every rule of the lapidary style; will sound ridiculous to foreign scholars, as they are almost unintelligible to natives; are long, intricate, and almost Teutonic, rather than Latin, in construction,

“ One half will not be *understood*,  
The other not be read.”

Among those who were considered in Rome the most practically acquainted with the lapidary style was Monsignor Gasperini, first Professor of Belles-lettres, then Rector of the Roman Seminary, and finally Secretary of Latin Letters to the Pope. To this obliging, amiable, and learned man many had recourse when they wanted an inscription composed or polished. He was the author of most put up in our college. At his next



week's audience, he laid the corrected inscription before Leo, who read it, approved highly of it, thanked him most cordially, folded, and placed it under the lion-mounted slab, where it remained, till sought and found, a few days later, after his death. He transacted his business with his usual serenity; and, in dismissing him, thanked his secretary with an earnestness that struck him as peculiar. They never saw one another again upon earth.

On the 6th of February, after having descended to the apartments of the Secretary of State, Cardinal Bernetti, by a private staircase, and held a long conference with him, he returned to his own closet, and resumed his work. He was there seized with his last illness; and it was generally believed that an operation unskilfully performed had aggravated instead of relieving its symptoms. He bore the torturing pain of his disease with perfect patience, asked for the last rites of the Church, and expired, in calm and freedom from suffering, on the tenth.

He was buried temporarily in the sarcophagus which had enshrined for a time the remains of his predecessors, and then in a vault constructed in front of St. Leo the Great's altar; where, in the centre of the pavement corresponding by its

lines with the small dome above, was inlaid in brass the following inscription, alluded to as composed by himself. No one can read it and fail to be touched by its elegant simplicity.

LEONI . MAGNO  
PATRONO . COELESTI  
ME . SUPPLEX . COMMENDANS  
HIC . APUD . SACROS . EIVS . CINERES  
LOCVM . SEPULTURAE . ELEGI  
LEO XII.  
HVMILIS . CLIENS  
HAEREDVM . TANTI . NOMINIS  
MINIMVS

# PIUS THE EIGHTH.


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## CHAPTER I.

### HIS ELECTION AND PREVIOUS HISTORY.

A PONTIFICATE which commenced on the 31st of March, in 1829, and closed on the 1st of December of the following year, limited thus to a duration of twenty months, cannot be expected to afford very ample materials for either public records or personal recollections. Such was the brief sovereignty in Church and State of the learned and holy Pius VIII.

The election to this high dignity, and the succession to this venerable name, of Cardinal Francis Xavier Castiglioni cannot be said to have taken Rome by surprise. At the preceding conclave of 1823 he was known to have united more suffrages than any of his colleagues, till the plenary number centred suddenly on Cardinal della Genga; nor had anything occurred since to disqualify him for similar favour, except the addition of some six years more to an age already sufficiently advanced. In fact the duration of the conclave was evidence of the facility with



which the electors arrived at their conclusion. Leo XII. died, as has been stated, February 10. On the 23rd the cardinals entered the conclave; and fresh arrivals continued for several days. Indeed it was not till the 3rd of March that the Cardinal Albani, accredited representative of Austria in the conclave, and charged with the *veto* held by the Emperor, entered within the sacred precincts.

On the 31st of that month, he was the first to break through them, and from the usual place announce to the assembled crowds, that Cardinal Castiglioni was elected Pope, and had taken the name of Pius VIII. It will be naturally asked, what were the qualities which secured to him this rapid nomination. His short pontificate did not allow time for the display of any extraordinary powers; nor would it be fair, without evidence of them, to attribute them to him. But there was all the moral assurance, which a previous life could give, of his possessing the gifts necessary to make him more than an ordinary man in his high elevation.

In an hereditary monarchy, the successor to the throne may be known for many years to his future subjects, and he may have been, during the period, qualifying himself for his coming responsibility. He may have manifested symp-

toms of principles completely opposed to those of his father, or of his house; and given promises, or thrown out hints, of a total departure from domestic or hereditary policy. Or, he may have been a loose and abandoned crown-prince, a threat, rather than a promise, to the coming generation. Perhaps the young Prince Hal may turn out a respectable King Henry; or, more likely, Windsor Castle may continue, on a regal scale, the vices of Carlton House. The nation, however, rightly accepts the royal gift, and must be content. For in compensation, the advantages of succession to a throne by descent are so great and so manifest, that the revival of an elective monarchy in Europe would be considered, by all who are not prepared to see it lapse into a presidency, as a return to times of anarchy and revolution. The quiet subsidence of an empire by election into one of succession, within our own days, proves that, even in a country which violent changes have affected less than they would have done any other, the best safeguards to peace and guarantees of order are most certainly found in the simple and instinctive method of transmitting royal prerogatives through royal blood. How much of Poland's calamities and present condition are due to perseverance in the elective principle!

But there is one, and only one, necessary exception to this rule. The sovereignty of the Church could not, under any circumstances, be handed down in a family succession ; not even did it not enforce the celibacy of its clergy. The head of the Church is not the spiritual ruler of one kingdom, and his office cannot be an heirloom, like crown-jewels. His headship extends over an entire world, spiritually indeed, yet sensibly and efficaciously : kingdoms and republics are equally comprised in it ; and what belongs to so many must in fact be the property of none. At the same time, it is evident that the duties of this sublime functional power, running through every problem of social polity, can only be discharged by a person of matured age and judgment : there could be no risk of regencies or tutorships, of imbecility or hereditary taints, of scandalous antecedents or present vices. Only an election, by men trained themselves in the preparatory studies and practices of the ecclesiastical state, of one whose life and conversation had passed before their eyes, could secure the appointment of a person duly endowed for so high an office. They look, of course, primarily to the qualities desirable for this spiritual dignity. It is a Pope whom they have to elect for the ecclesiastical rule of the world, not the sovereign



of a small territory. His secular dominion is the consequence, not the source, of his religious position. Certainly it cannot be doubted that in later times the electors have been faithful to their trust. What Ranke has shown of their predecessors is incontestable of more modern Pontiffs; that, not only none has disgraced his position by unworthy conduct, but all have proved themselves equal to any emergency that has met them, and distinguished by excellent and princely qualities.

That those characteristics which determine the choice of the electors do not first manifest themselves in conclave, but have been displayed through years of public life in legations, in nunciatures, in bishoprics, or in office at home, must be obvious. Hence men of accurate observation may have noted them; and a certain indefinite feeling of anticipation may be general, about the probable successor to the vacant chair. In Cardinal Castiglioni many qualities of high standard had been long observed; such as could not fail to recommend him to the notice and even preference of his colleagues. To say that his life had been irreproachable would be but little: it had been always edifying, and adorned with every ecclesiastical virtue.

Though born (November 20, 1761) of noble



family, in the small city of Cingoli, he had come early to Rome to pursue his studies, and had distinguished himself in them so much, that in 1800, when only thirty-nine years old, he had been raised to the episcopal dignity in the See of Montalto near Ascoli. Here he had signalised himself by his apostolic zeal, and had consequently drawn upon his conduct the jealous eye of the French authorities. He was known to be staunch in his fidelity to the Sovereign Pontiff, and to the rights of the Church: consequently he was denounced as dangerous, and honoured by exile, first to Milan, and then to Mantua. We are told that those who had charge of him were astonished to find, in the supposed fire-brand, one of the gentlest and meekest of human beings. In all this, however, there was much to recommend him to those who had met to elect a shepherd, and not a hireling for Christ's flock.

But in this proof of his constancy there had been testimony borne to another, and if not a higher, at least a rarer, quality. This was ecclesiastical learning. Of his familiarity with other portions of this extensive literary field, there will be occasion to speak later. But the branch of theological lore in which Cardinal Castiglioni had been most conspicuous was Canon law. Some readers may not be willing to con-

cede any great importance or dignity to such a proficiency, the value of which they may have had few opportunities of estimating. Canon law is, however, a system of ecclesiastical jurisprudence, as complex and as complete as any other legislative and judicial code: and since it is in force at Rome, and has to be referred to even in transactions with other countries where ecclesiastical authority is more limited, a person solidly grounded in it, and practically versed in its application, naturally possesses a valuable advantage in the conduct of affairs, especially those belonging to the highest spheres. We would not allow a foreigner the right to despise that peculiar learning which we think qualifies a lawyer of eminence for the woolsack; especially if from his ignorance of our unique legal principles and practice, he may not have qualified himself to judge of it. However, the attainments of Cardinal Castiglioni rose even higher than these. He had been originally the scholar of the first Canonist of his day, and had become his assistant. The work which stands highest among modern manuals on ecclesiastical law is Devoti's Institutes: and this was the joint work of that prelate and Castiglioni. Indeed, the most learned portion of it, the notes which enrich and explain it, were mainly the production of the pupil. Now

it so happened, that when the relations between Pius VII. and the French Emperor became intricate and unfriendly, and delicate questions arose of conflicting claims and jurisdictions, it was to the Bishop of Montalto that the Pope had recourse, as his learned and trusty counsellor in such dangerous matters. He was found equal to the occasion. His answers and reports were firm, precise, and erudite; nor did he shrink from the responsibility of having given them. It was this freedom and inflexibility which drew upon him the dislike of the occupying power in Italy. Surely such learning must receive its full value with those who have seen its fruits, when they are deliberating about providing a prudent steersman and a skilful captain for the bark of Peter, still travailed by past tempests, and closely threatened by fresh storms.

When the Pope was restored to his own, Castiglioni's merits were fully acknowledged and rewarded. On the 8th of March, 1816, he was raised to the cardinalitial dignity, and named Bishop of Cesena, the Pope's own native city. He was in course of time brought to Rome, and so became Bishop of Tusculum, or Frascati, one of the episcopal titles in the Sacred College. He was also named Penitentiary, an office requiring great experience and prudence. He enjoyed

the friendship of Consalvi as well as the confidence of their common master, and thus his ecclesiastical knowledge was brought most opportunely to assist the diplomatic experience and ability of the more secular minister. In fact, it might be said that they often worked in common, and even gave conjointly audience to foreign ministers, in matters of a double interest. And such must often be transactions between the Holy See and Catholic Powers. Again, we may ask, was it not more than probable that such experience in ecclesiastical affairs of the very highest order, and such results of its application, should carry due weight with persons occupied in the selection of a ruler over the Church, who should not come new and raw into the active government of the whole religious world?

Such were the qualifications which induced the electors in conclave to unite their suffrages in the person of Cardinal Castiglioni; and it is not wonderful that he should have selected for his pontifical name, PIUS THE EIGHTH. Indeed, it has been said that the Holy Pontiff, to whom he thus recorded his gratitude, had long before given him this title. For, on some occasion when he was transacting business with him, Pius VII. said to him with a smile, "Your

Holiness, Pius the Eighth, may one day settle this matter.”<sup>1</sup>

Such auguries being seldom told till after fulfilment,—for without the modesty that would conceal them, there would not be the virtues that can deserve them,—they are naturally little heeded. To tell the truth, one does not see why, if a Jewish High Priest had the gift of prophecy for his year of office<sup>2</sup>, one of a much higher order and dignity should not occasionally be allowed to possess it. In this case, however, the privilege was not necessary. As it has been already intimated, the accumulation of merits in the Cardinal might strike the Pope even more, from his closer observation, than they would the electors; and the good omen might only be the result of sagacity combined with affection. In like manner, a natural shrewdness which Pius possessed might have guided him to a similar prediction, if true as reported, to his intermediate successor, Leo XII. It used to be said that when Monsignor della Genga was suddenly told to prepare for the nunciature, and consequently for episcopal consecration and was therefore overwhelmed with grief, he flew to the feet of Pius to entreat a

<sup>1</sup> D'Artaud, *Life of Pius VIII.*

<sup>2</sup> Jo. xi. 52.

respite, when the holy man said to him; "It is the white coif<sup>1</sup> that I put upon your head." The many noble gifts which showed themselves in the youthful prelate, sufficient to induce the Pope at once to send him abroad as his representative in troublesome and dangerous times, may have carried his penetrating eye beyond the successful fulfilment of that mission, to the accomplishment of one higher and more distant.

But it is more difficult to account for other auguries, where there can be no recourse to prophecy or to shrewdness. All history is full of them: some we throw aside to the score of superstition, others we unhesitatingly give up to fiction; an immense amount we make over to what we call singular or happy coincidences; while a residue is allowed to remain unappropriated, as inexplicable or devoid of sufficient evidence to be judged on, as too slight to be believed yet too good not to be repeated. In the first book of this volume, a little incident was told of a coachman's good-natured omen to the young Benedictine monk, afterwards Pius VII., and the authority was given for it; only one remove from the august subject of the anecdote. Another, and more strange one, recurs

<sup>1</sup> The zucchetto, worn white only by the Pope.

to mind, and rests upon exactly the same authority. I received it from the venerable Monsignor Testa, who assured me that he heard it from the Pope. When he was a monk in Rome, he used often to accompany his relation Cardinal Braschi in his evening drive. One afternoon, as they were just issuing from his palace, a man, apparently an artisan, without a coat and in his apron, leaped on the carriage step (which used then to be outside), put his head into the carriage, and said, pointing first to one and then to the other: "Ecco due papi, prima questo, e poi questo." "See two popes, first this and then this." He jumped down, and disappeared. Had any one else witnessed the scene from without, he might have been tempted to ask: "Are all things well? Why came this madman to you?" And the two astonished inmates of the carriage might have almost answered with Jehu; "Thus and thus did he speak to us; and he said, Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed you kings over Israel."<sup>1</sup> The Pope added that, after the fulfilment of the double prophecy, he had ordered every search and inquiry to be made after the man, but had not been able to find him. There had, however, been ample time

<sup>1</sup> IV. Reg. ix. 11, 12.

for him to have finished a tolerably long life ; for Braschi, as Pius VI., reigned nearly the years of Peter.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This anecdote brings to mind another concerning a very different person, which I do not remember to have seen published. A gentleman, who, though he differed materially in politics and in religion from the illustrious Daniel O'Connell, enjoyed much of his genial kindness, and greatly admired his private character, told me that he received the following account from him of his first great success at the Bar. He was retained as counsel in an action between the city of W—— and another party respecting a salmon-weir on the river. The corporation claimed it as belonging to them ; their opponents maintained it was an open fishery. Little was known of its history further than that it was in the neighbourhood of an ancient Danish colony. But it had always been known by the name of "the *lax* weir," and this formed the chief ground of legal resistance to the city's claim. Able counsel was urging it, while O'Connell, who had to reply for the city, was anxiously racking his fertile brains for a reply. But little relief came thence. *Lax*, it was argued, meant loose ; and loose was the opposite of reserved, or preserved, or guarded, or under any custody of a corporation. The point was turned every way, and put in every light, and looked brilliant and dazzling to audience, litigants, and counsel. The jury were pawing the ground, or rather shuffling their feet, in impatience for their verdict and their dinner ; and the nictitating eye of the court, which had long ceased taking notes, was blinking a drowsy assent. Nothing could be plainer. A *lax* weir could not be a *close* weir (though such reasoning might not apply to corporations or constituencies) ; and no weir could have borne the title of *lax*, if it had ever been a close one. At this critical conjuncture some one threw across the table to O'Connell a little screwed up twist of paper, according to the wont of courts of justice. He opened, read it, and nodded grateful thanks. A change came over his countenance : the well-known O'Connell smile, half frolic, half sarcasm, played about his lips ; he was quite at his ease, and blandly waited the conclusion of his antagonist's speech. He rose to reply, with hardly a listener ; by degrees the jury was motionless, the lack-lustre eye of the court regained its brightness ; the



The new Pope chose for his secretary of state, the Cardinal Albani, a man vigorous in mind, though advanced in years, whose views no doubt he knew to coincide with his own, and whose politics were of the school of his old colleague, Consalvi. The house of Albani, too, was one of the most illustrious and noble in Italy, boasting even of imperial alliances. In the Cardinal were centred its honours, its wealth, and what he greatly valued, the magnificent museum of which mention has before been made. He died in 1834, at the advanced age of eighty-four.

opposing counsel stared in amazement and incredulity, and O'Connell's clients rubbed their hands in delight. What had he done? Merely repeated to the gentlemen of the jury the words of the little twist of paper. "Are you aware that in Danish *lachs* means salmon?" The reader may imagine with what wit and scorn the question was prepared, with what an air of triumph it was put, and by what a confident demolition of all the adversary's *lar* argumentation it was followed. Whether there was then at hand a Danish dictionary (a German one would have sufficed), or the judge reserved the point, I know not; but the confutation proved triumphant: O'Connell carried the day, was made standing counsel to the city of W——, and never after wanted a brief. But he sought in vain, after his speech, for his timely succourer: no one knew who had thrown the note; whoever it was he had disappeared, and O'Connell could never make out to whom he was indebted.

## CHAPTER II.

## PERSONAL CHARACTER.

THE appearance of Pius VIII. was not, perhaps, so prepossessing at first sight, as that of his two predecessors. This was not from any want either of character or of amiability in his features. When you came to look into his countenance, it was found to be what the reader will think it in his portrait, noble and gentle. The outlines were large and dignified in their proportions; and the mouth and eyes full of sweetness. But an obstinate and chronic herpetic affection in the neck kept his head turned and bowed down, imparted an awkwardness, or want of elegance, to his movements, and prevented his countenance being fully and favourably viewed. This, however, was not the worst; he seemed, and indeed was, in a state of constant pain, which produced an irritation that manifested itself sometimes in his tone and expression. One of his secretaries mentioned to me an instance: when, on his giving a good-natured reply, it immediately

drew from the Pope the blindest of smiles, and a most condescending apology, on account of his infirmities.

Another effect of this suffering was, that many of the functions of the Church were beyond his strength. For example, the *Miserere* in Holy Week, one of the most splendid of musical performances, from being exactly suited in its character to its circumstances, was obliged to be curtailed, because the Pope could not kneel so long as it required. This was indeed but a trifle ; for, notwithstanding his constant pain, he was assiduous in his attention to business, and indefatigable in the discharge of every duty.

Being himself of a most delicate conscience, he was perhaps severe and stern in his principles, and in enforcing them. He was, for example, most scrupulous about any of his family taking advantage of his elevation to seek honours or high offices. On the very day of his election, he wrote to his nephews a letter in which he communicated to them the welcome news of his having been raised, by Divine Providence, to the Chair of Peter, and shed bitter tears over the responsibilities with which this dignity overburthened him. He solicited their prayers, commanded them to refrain from all pomp and pride, and added ; “let none of you, or of the

family, move from your posts." During his pontificate it was proposed to bestow on the great St. Bernard, the title of Doctor of the Universal Church, in the same manner as it is held by St. Augustine or St. Jerome. It was said that some one engaged in the cause, by way of enlisting the Pope's sympathies in it, remarked that St. Bernard belonged to the same family; since the Chatillons in France, and the Castiglioni in Italy were only different branches of the same illustrious house. This remark, whether in the pleadings or in conversation, sufficed to check the proceedings; as the Pontiff, jealous of any possible partiality or bias on his part, and fearful of even a suspicion of such a motive having influenced him, ordered them to be suspended. They were afterwards resumed and brought to a happy conclusion under his pontificate.

In speaking of this Pope's literary accomplishments, his superior knowledge of Canon law was singled out. But this was by no means his exclusive pursuit. To mention one of a totally different class, he possessed a very rare acquaintance with numismatics. His French biographer bears witness to his having held long conferences with him on this subject, which formed one of his own favourite pursuits, while Castiglioni was yet a cardinal. He says that, when closeted with

him for a long time, people in waiting imagined they were engaged in solemn diplomatic discussions, while, in truth, they were merely debating the genuineness or value of some Vespasian or Athenæ.

Biblical literature, however, was his favourite pursuit, and the writer can bear witness to his having made himself fully acquainted with its modern theories, and especially with German rationalistic systems. Very soon after his accession, he obtained an audience, in company with the late most promising Professor Allemand, who occupied the Chair of Holy Scripture in the Roman Seminary, and had collected a most valuable library of modern biblical works, in many languages. The Pope then gave formal audiences on his throne, and not in his private cabinet, so that a long conversation was more difficult. Still he detained us long, discoursing most warmly on the importance of those studies, in which he encouraged his willing listeners to persevere, and gave evidence of his own extensive and minute acquaintance with their many branches. He had, however, supplied better proof of this knowledge than could be given in a mere conversation.

It is well known to every scholar, how thoroughly, for more than a generation, the

Bible in Germany had been the sport of every fancy, and the theme for erudite infidelity. The word "rationalism" gives the key to the system of stripping the sacred volume of the supernatural; explaining away whatever transcends the ordinary powers of nature or of man, whether in action or in knowledge, and reducing the book to the measure of a very interesting ancient Veda or Saga, and its personages to that of mythic characters, Hindoo or Scandinavian. Till Hengstenberg appeared, most Protestant scriptural literature ran in the same channel, with more or less of subtlety or of grossness, now refined and now coarse, according to the tastes or characters of authors. More diluted in Michaelis or Rosenmüller the younger; more elegantly clothed in Gesenius; more ingenious in Eichhorn, and more daring in Paulus, the same spirit tainted the whole of this branch of sacred literature from Semler to Strauss, who gave the finishing stroke to the system, by the combination of all the characteristics of his predecessors, mingled with a matchless art, that seems simplicity. Perhaps from this concentration of the poison of years arose the counteraction in the system or constitution of religious Germany, manifested by a return to a more positive theology.

This growing evil had manifested itself, up to a

certain point, only in Protestant divinity; and the universities of Heidelberg and Halle, Jena and Leipsig, were among the principal seats of this new infidelity. It was the more dangerous, because it had discarded all the buffoonery and mockery of the grinning *philosophe*, and worked out its infidelity like a problem, with all the calm and gravity of a philosopher. But at length there appeared a man whose works, professedly Catholic, were tainted with the neology of his countrymen, and threatened to infect his readers and his hearers with its creeping venom. This was Jahn, professor of Scripture in the University of Vienna; a hard scholar, who used to say, that no one need hope to push forward his art or science a step without studying eighteen hours a day; a really learned man, and of sound judgment, except on the one point on which he went so lamentably astray.

He published two principal works, an Introduction to the Old Testament, and a Biblical Archæology: both most valuable for their erudition, but both dangerously tinged with the principles of infidelity, especially in the very first principles of biblical science. These were both large works; so he published compendiums of them in Latin, each in one volume, for the use of students. But even into these the poison was

transfused. Perhaps Jahn was soured and irritated by the treatment which he received from his theological opponents, one in particular, immensely his inferior in learning, though sound in principle; and he certainly replied with acrimony and biting sarcasm. However, his works were justly prohibited, and in the end withdrawn from the schools.

It was a pity that they should be lost; and accordingly a remedy was proposed. This consisted of the republication of the two Introductions, cleansed of all their perilous stuff, and appearing under the name of a new author. This idea was either suggested, or immediately and warmly encouraged, by Cardinal Castiglioni. The undertaking was committed to the learned Dr. F. Ackermann, professor also at Vienna, and a friend of Dr. Jahn's. The sheets of the volumes were forwarded to Rome, and revised by the hand of the Cardinal. I cannot remember whether it was he who mentioned it himself at the audience alluded to, or whether I learned it from Dr. Ackermann, with whom I then had the advantage of maintaining a profitable correspondence. His Commentary on the Minor Prophets proves the learning and ability of this excellent man to have been equal to much more than mere adaptations of the works of others.



But, at the same time, the part taken by Pius in this useful undertaking is evidence of his zeal, and of his accomplishments in the most essential branch of theological learning. Further evidence will not be wanting.

## CHAPTER III.

## FRENCH AND ENGLISH CARDINALS.

THE short duration of Pius's reign did not give opportunity for making any great addition to the Sacred College ; nor indeed would this subject be considered of sufficient interest for general readers, were there not some peculiar circumstances here connected with it.

There is certainly no dignity in Europe more thoroughly European than the cardinalate ; and there is no reason why it should not have, one day, its representatives in America or Asia, or even Australia. It is indeed an ecclesiastical distinction, though admitted to possess civil rank throughout the Continent ; but every other dignity is similarly confined to a particular class. A civilian cannot hope to be a general, or an admiral, or a lord-chancellor ; nor can an ecclesiastic be in the House of Commons, nor can a lawyer obtain the Victoria Cross. Every honour has its narrow approach ; every elevation its steep and solitary path. But each is

limited to its own country. A Wellington may have a galaxy of stars twinkling in diamonds from the azure velvet of his pall; and a few crosses may be exchanged between allied nations. But there is no military power that flecks the uniform of the valiant—whether scarlet, blue, or white—with a badge of honour; no “Republic of letters” which places laurel crowns on the brows of the learned and the scientific, in whatever language they have recorded their lore; no bountiful Caliph, or Lord of Provence, to whom the gentle minstrel of every nation is a sacred being, entitled to good entertainment and respect. In fine, no secular power affects either to look abroad among foreign nations for persons whom to honour, as of right, or to expect other sovereigns and states to solicit for their subjects its peculiar badge of generally recognised dignity.

But the Church, being universal in its destinies, makes no national distinction, and the honours which she bestows are not confined to any country: but, on the contrary, they receive an acknowledgment, which in some may, indeed, be merely courteous, but in most is legally assured. The Code Napoleon, wherever it prevails, has this provision. As a matter of course, where there is good understanding between any government and the Holy See, the distribution

of such a dignity is matter of mutual arrangement; and it must be the fault of the government, if such amicable relations do not exist. There is consequently a recognised right in the four great Catholic Powers, to propose a certain number of their ecclesiastical subjects for the cardinalitial dignity. Formerly when a general promotion, as it was called, took place, that is when a number of particular persons holding certain high offices were simultaneously invested with the purple, the privileged Courts had a claim to propose their candidates. This usage may now be considered almost obsolete; and indeed the reigning Pontiff has dealt most liberally in this respect, by naming many more foreigners than ever before held place in that ecclesiastical senate.

To illustrate the different principles on which such an addition may be conducted, we may mention two of those whom Pius VIII. invested with this high position, one French, the other English.

The first was of the noble family of Rohan-Chabot, which under the first of these designations belongs equally to Germany and to Bohemia, as a princely house; and in France traces descent from St. Louis, and has infused its blood by marriage into the royal House

of Valois. Its armorial motto has embodied in a few lines as strong a consciousness of all but regal claims, as such a distilled drop of family haughtiness could well enclose :

" Roi ne peux,  
Prince ne veux,  
Rohan suis."

No one could have a higher right by birth to aspire to the Roman purple, than had the Abbé Louis Francis Augustus, of the Dukes of Rohan-Chabot, Prince of Leon, who had embraced the ecclesiastical state. Moreover, he was distinguished by piety, sufficient learning, and unimpeachable conduct. In 1824, an effort was made to obtain for him the hat from Leo XII. The Pope replied, that France must be content to abide by its usage, of only proposing for this honour its archbishops and bishops. The French ambassador, whose relation the young Duke was, made every exertion for him ; but when, in his absence, his *chargé d'affaires*, in an audience proposed the subject, the Pope, in his sweetest manner, replied by a Latin verse,

" Sunt animus, pietas, virtus ; sed deficit ætas."

The applicant was rather surprised at this ready and complete reply, which did full justice to both

sides of the question. However, he was compelled, by fresh instances, to make a new appeal to the kindness of the Pope. He hinted at the matter in an audience, and saw, as he informs us, by Leo's quietly mischievous look, that he was not to be taken by surprise. Varying his former hexameter, but coming to the same conclusion, he replied,

"Sunt mores, doctrina, genus ; sed deficit ætas."

He added, that he had an ample record in his mind of the merits, virtues, qualities, and claims of the Abbé de Rohan, arranged there in good verses, but that every one of them ended by the same dactyl and spondee.

It was well known, however, that he would willingly have introduced into the Sacred College the venerable Bishop of Hermopolis, Monseigneur Frayssinous, did not his modesty absolutely resist every effort of the Pope<sup>1</sup> to obtain his acceptance.

It was not till 1830, that De Rohan, being now Archbishop of Besançon, was promoted by Pius VIII. In the revolution which shortly followed in France, he was intercepted by a mob, and treated with great indignity ; a cir-

<sup>1</sup> Chevalier D'Artaud, Vie de Pie VIII.

cumstance which probably shortened his life. For he died in February, 1833, in his 42nd year.

Very different is the cardinalate bestowed on our countryman Thomas Weld. It has been seen that the hat which Leo XII. wished to bestow on Bishop Baines, in gratitude to the Benedictine Order, was given by Pius VIII. to F. Crescini, at the very beginning of his Pontificate, to be enjoyed for only a very brief space. Cardinal Weld was named partly in consideration of his own personal claims, partly also to second a desire of seeing an Englishman among the highest dignitaries of the Church. Why, it was asked — and the Pope could not fail to see the justice of the question, — should almost every other nation be represented in that body, to which is entrusted the management of religious affairs throughout the world, except the one whose language is spoken by a great proportion of its Christian inhabitants? Not only the British Islands, but the United States, the East and West Indies, Canada, the Cape, Australia, and the Islands of the Pacific, were in daily communication with the Holy See, and with the Congregation of Propaganda, which attended to their wants. Was it not reasonable, that near the ruling Chair, and in the number of its counsellors, there should be at least one, who might

represent that immense race, endowed with its intelligence, familiar with its wants and its forms of expressing them, as well as with the peculiar position in which many portions thereof were placed? It would seem hardly fair to deny this, or to murmur at its being acted on.

The person first selected for this honourable post, was one who certainly could never have looked forward to it as his future lot. He was born in London, January 22, 1773, and was the eldest son of Thomas Weld of Lulworth Castle, and Mary Stanley, who belonged to the elder and Catholic branch of the Stanley family, now extinct. He was educated entirely at home; and early gave proof of his great piety and munificent charity. This was particularly displayed in favour of the many religious communities, which the French revolution threw like shipwrecked families on our coast. He actually treated them as kind inhabitants of the shore would, received them into his very house, and provided for all their wants. This he first did concurrently with his excellent father; but he continued all his good works after his parent's death, or rather increased them. The Trappist nuns were received at Lulworth, and, with rare generosity, Mr. Weld bought from them, when they quitted his estate, the buildings, to him worthless, which

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they had been allowed, and even assisted, to raise. The poor Clares from Gravelines, and the nuns of the Visitation, who took refuge, the first at Plymouth, and the second at Shepton-Mallet, were special objects of his bounty.

In the mean time he had married, and had been blessed with a daughter, the worthy representative of the hereditary virtues of his house. He had taken, and worthily filled his place in society; he had done the honours of his house with liberality and dignity, had pursued the duties of the English gentleman in his noblest character, acted as a country magistrate, enjoyed country sports, and reciprocated hospitality with his neighbours. It is well known that George III. in his sojourns at Weymouth used to visit Lulworth, and always expressed the greatest regard for the Cardinal's family. What life could have been less considered the way to ecclesiastical honours than this of a Dorsetshire country squire, in the field, or at his board?

Yet they who knew him intimately, and had watched through his life the virtue that distinguished and the piety which sanctified it, were not surprised to find him, after the death of his excellent consort in 1815, and the marriage of his daughter in 1818 to the eldest son of that sterling nobleman Lord Clifford, abandoning the

world, resigning his estates to his next brother, their present worthy occupier, of yachting celebrity, and removing on an annual pension to Paris to embrace the ecclesiastical state. He was ordained priest in April, 1821, by the Archbishop of that city.

He returned to England, and entered on the usual duties of the priesthood at Chelsea, and continued his liberal exercise of charity till the Bishop Vicar-Apostolic of Upper Canada, obtained his appointment as his coadjutor. He received, accordingly, the episcopal consecration on the 6th of August, 1826. He remained in England, partly for the transaction of business, partly from reasons of health. During the space of three years, that he “*tacitis regnabat Amyclis*”—for he was bishop *in partibus* of that classical city<sup>1</sup>—he lived at Hammersmith, directing there a community of Benedictine nuns.

He was then invited to Rome for higher purposes, at the same time that his daughter's health required change of climate, and it was natural for him to accompany her. On the 25th of May, 1830, he was named Cardinal by Pius VIII.

Such a new and unexpected occurrence might have been variously interpreted, according to

<sup>1</sup> Not the Italian one, however, to which the verse and epithet refer.

party views ; and it would have been naturally expected, that expression would be given to those conflicting feelings. This, at any rate, was not the case in Rome. Unanimous and unequivocal was the expression of opinion among British residents and travellers there. All flocked to the reception given by the new Cardinal, and manifested their satisfaction at such a manifestation of good will towards his country. And similar were the expressions of feeling that reached him from home. In the funeral oration<sup>1</sup> delivered at his sumptuous obsequies performed by order of his son-in-law, Lord Clifford, on the 22nd of April, 1837, is the following sentence : “ He received assurances from persons of high influence and dignity, that his nomination had excited no jealousy, as of old, but, on the contrary, had afforded satisfaction to those whom every Englishman esteems and reveres : individuals, who at home are known to indulge in expressions of decided hostility to Rome, and to our holy religion, recognised in him a representative of both, whom they venerated and gladly approached ; and when his hospitable mansion was thrown open to his countrymen, I believe that never was the sternest professor of a different

<sup>1</sup> Printed in English and Italian at Rome in that year.

creed known to decline the honour, which the invitation of the English Cardinal was acknowledged to confer."

The first part of this sentence only can require any explanation. It shows that the circumstance alluded to was sufficiently public to have passed the bounds of delicate reserve. Indeed, it is too honourable to all parties to need being shrouded under any secrecy. Soon after his elevation, Cardinal Weld received a letter from the natural guardian of the heiress to the Throne, introducing a distinguished member of her household, in which he was assured not only that his promotion had given satisfaction to the exalted circle to which she belonged, but that should he ever visit England, he would be received by that family with the respect which was his due. Such is the impressed recollection of this interesting and generously minded document, read at the time. Of course, a few years later, its practical ratification would have had to depend upon the possible humour of a minister, rather than on any nobler impulses of a royal mind. But there can be no doubt that on this occasion there was no jealousy or anger felt anywhere: perhaps the known virtues and retired life of the new Cardinal gained him this universal benevolence; perhaps the press saw nothing to gain by

agitating the nation on the subject. Certain it is, however, that the promotion was made by the free choice of the Pontiff, without any presentation from England, or any consultation with its government. In this respect, it stands in marked contrast with that of even a De Rohan.

It could not be expected that, at the mature age which Cardinal Weld had reached, he would master a new language, or perfectly learn the ways of transacting high ecclesiastical business ; nor had the occupations of his life, nor even his brief studies, been calculated to make him equal those who from youth had been devoted to legal and theological pursuits. The Cardinal most wisely provided for these necessary deficiencies. For his theological adviser he selected Professor Fornari, one of the most eminent divines in Rome, who was soon after sent as Nuncio first to Belgium and then to Paris, and elevated himself in due time to the dignity on which his counsels then shed such a lustre. For secretaries, at different times, he had the present Bishop of Plymouth, Dr. Vaughan, and the Abbate De Luca, afterwards made Bishop of Aversa, and actually Nuncio at Vienna, a man of more than ordinary learning and ability, well versed, even before, in English literature, as well as in that of his own and other countries.

As his share, the Cardinal brought into his council sterling good sense and business-like habits, thorough uprightness and sincere humility; and soon acquired considerable influence in the congregations or departments of ecclesiastical affairs to which he was attached. At the same time he was genuinely courteous, hospitable, and obliging. His apartments in the Odescalchi Palace were splendidly furnished, and periodically filled with the aristocracy of Rome, native and foreign, and with multitudes of his countrymen, every one of whom found him always ready to render him any service. Indeed, if he had a fault, it was the excessiveness of his kindness, too often indiscriminating in its objects, and liable to be imposed upon by the designing or the unworthy. But surely, if one must look back, at life's close, upon some past frailty, it would not be this defect that would beget most remorse.

That end soon came. The life of close application and seclusion, in a southern climate, taken up at an age when the constitution is no longer pliant, could not be engrafted easily on a youth of vigorous activity spent among the breezy moors of the Dorsetshire hills. Great sensibility to cold and atmospheric changes gradually became perceptible, and at length assumed the

form of a pulmonary disease. Surrounded by his family, and strengthened by every religious succour, the Cardinal sank calmly into the repose of the just, on the 10th of April, 1837. Seldom has a stranger been more deeply and feelingly regretted by the inhabitants of a city, than was this holy man by the poor of Rome.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS OF THE PONTIFICATE.

IF the short duration of Pius the Eighth's reign has been pleaded in excuse for paucity of events and of recollections, it cannot be adduced as a reason for the want of great and even startling occurrences. For in the course of a few months may be concentrated many such, full of portentous consequences; and in them were probably deposited the "*semina rerum*," which a future generation will not suffice to unfold into perfect growth. Such a period was the narrow space comprised in this Pontificate. Three or four signal occurrences will suffice to verify this assertion.

And first—to begin with the very outset of Pius's Pontificate—he was elected March 31, 1829; and, scarcely a month later, it was my pleasing duty to communicate to him the glad-some tidings of Catholic Emancipation. This great and just measure received the royal assent on the 23rd of April following. It need hardly be remarked, that such a message was one of



unbounded joy, and might well have been communicated to the Head of the Catholic Church in the words by which the arrival of paschal time is announced to him every year: "*Pater sancte, annuntio vobis gaudium magnum.*" To him, who was not only most intelligent, but alive to all that passed throughout Christendom, the full meaning of this measure was of course apparent. But generally it was not so. In foreign countries, the condition of Catholics in Great Britain was but little understood. The religion, not the political state, of their fellow-believers mainly interested other nations. Through all the Continent, catholicity in this empire was supposed to be confined to Ireland; and, again and again, an English Catholic traveller has heard himself corrected, when he has so described himself, by such an expression as this: "Of course you mean Irish?" In fact, even as late as the period we are dwelling on, when languages were as yet not much studied, and there was a more feeble circulation of foreign periodical literature, less travelling too, and slenderer international relations, the mutual ignorance of countries was very great. Nor, either then or now, could one venture to say that there was or is more true acquaintance with other nations among the general population of England,

than there is accurate knowledge of our island in Continental states.

The constitution of this country, especially, complicated as it is to ourselves, was a puzzle to races accustomed to simple monarchy for ages, and scarcely possessing experience of anything between that and bare republicanism. To tell them that Catholics in Great Britain were excluded from seats in Parliament, bore perhaps with many no more sense of a hardship than to hear that they were not allowed a place in the Turkish Divan. They could not appreciate the influence and importance of the position, nor the insufferable insult of a perpetual and hereditary incapacity for it. Hence our public rejoicing for the acquisition of this coveted boon was unintelligible to the multitude. After audience of the Pope, the Vicar Rector of the College (now Archbishop of Trebizond) and myself visited the Secretary of State, and received from him warm expressions of congratulation. We then proceeded to make preparations for our festival, on the usual Roman plan. The front of our house was covered with an elegant architectural design in variegated lamps, and an orchestra was erected opposite for festive music. In the morning of the appointed day, a *Te Deum*, attended by the various British colleges, was performed; in the

afternoon a banquet on a munificent scale was given at his villa near St. Paul's, by Monsignor Nicolai, the learned illustrator of that Basilica ; and in the evening we returned home to see the upturned faces of multitudes reflecting the brilliant "lamps of architecture" that tapestried our venerable walls. But the words "Emancipazione Cattolica," which were emblazoned in lamps along the front, were read by the people with difficulty, and interpreted by conjecture ; so that many came and admired, but went away, unenlightened by the blaze that had dazzled them, into the darkness visible of surrounding streets.

In fact the first of the two words, long and formidable to untutored lips was no household word in Italy, nor was there any imaginable connection in ordinary persons' minds between it and its adjective, nor between the two and England. But to us and our guests there was surely a magic in the words, that spoke to our hearts, and awakened there sweet music, more cheering than that of our orchestra, and kindled up a brighter illumination in our minds than that upon our walls. We had left our country young, and hardly conscious of the wrongs which galled our elders, we should return to it in possession of our rights ; and thus have hardly experienced

more sense of injury than they who have been born since that happy era. So some of us could feel, and had not this its uses? Whatever may be considered the disadvantages of a foreign education, it possessed, especially at that period, this very great advantage, that it reared the mind, and nursed the affections, out of the reach of religious contests and their irritation. No "winged words" of anger or scorn, however powerfully fledged for flight, could well surmount the Alps; and, if they did, the venom must have dropped from their tip, as this must have lost its pungency, in so long a course. Scarcely any amount of roaring on platforms could have sent even a softened whisper of itself across the sea; and the continuous attacks of a hostile press could only reach one in the broken fragments that occasionally tessellated a foreign paper. Thus, one hardly knew of the bitter things said against what was dearest to us; and certainly I will bear willing testimony to the absence of all harsh words and uncharitable insinuations against others in public lectures, or private teaching, or even in conversation, at Rome. One grows up there in a kinder spirit, and learns to speak of errors in a gentler tone, than elsewhere, though in the very centre of highest orthodox feeling. Still, if wrongs had not been

keenly felt, the act of justice so honourable to one's country, and the sense of relief from degrading trammels, made every British Catholic heart rejoice in Rome, when the news reached us, that the struggle of years had been crowned with triumph, and that the laurels of a peaceful Waterloo had graced the same brows as were crowned by the wreaths of our last great sanguinary victory. It was, however, the future, and not the present, that gladdened that hour, the birth-hour of great and enduring events. This is certainly not the place to descant upon this subject; but it was too mighty a political act to have quietly subsided in a moment, among the other enactments of a session, or to be quoted as only one chapter of the statutes passed in a given year. The generation still exists which had life and action before the momentous step. Many survive it who regret even bitterly the good old days of exclusion, which amounted to monopoly for them and theirs: some too remain whose shackles were removed, but not the numbness and cramp which they had produced. By degrees society will consist more and more, and then entirely, of those who have grown up side by side from infancy under the fostering of impartial laws, in the feeling of essential equality, without consciousness or pretension of this having been a

concession. The remembrance of a condition of things, when one portion of the same community was a suppliant to the other for common rights, will have passed away ; and with it the pride of having refused or of having granted, and the humiliation of having long been spurned, and at last almost compulsorily relieved. Then, and only then, will that clear stage have been prepared, on which peaceful and intellectual contention can be conducted as between champions in ancient times, devoid of hate and of heat, and uninfluenced by recollections of mutual relations, then unknown to either side. But, certainly, the day that prepared such a prospect for a country divided in religion, may well be considered a bright one in the brief annals of the Pontificate within which it fell.

The second striking occurrence of Pius's Pontificate should rather bear another name ; it is a measure more than an event, proceeding from the Pope himself, of immense moment at the time, but not destined to produce its startling effects till seven years after his death. At a time when the anxieties, pains, and contention which this measure caused have been soothed and almost forgotten, at a moment when all are rejoicing at the coming alliance between the power to which it related, and our own royal

family, it would be ill-timed and ungracious to enter into any details of the Pope's celebrated answer to four great German prelates, on the subject of mixed marriages. They had consulted his predecessor on the conduct to be observed respecting them, not on general principles, but in connection with civil legislation, at variance with ecclesiastical law ; whereby their consciences were sorely perplexed. It was for them some such position as clergymen of the Established Church declared themselves to hold last year, in consequence of the new Divorce Act. They both considered the law of the land to conflict with that of God : but in the one case each person had to consult his own conscience alone, or many might contribute their individual convictions to a common fund of remonstrance, or a joint engine of resistance : in the other all had recourse to a recognised superior in spirituals, and head in Church government, who could speak as one having authority, and whom they would all obey.

Pius, as Cardinal Castiglioni, had gone fully into the case, and was, therefore, prepared for action. Before the close of the first year of his reign, he addressed his notable Brief to the Archbishop of Cologne, and the Bishops of Treves, Paderborn, and Munster, which was

immediately followed by a long practical instruction, bearing the signature of Cardinal Albani.

There is no intention of discussing the grounds or motives of this document, nor of going into the nature of its provisions, still less of justifying the Pope's conduct. Our purpose only requires of us a more pleasing task, that of characterising the paper itself. Reading it now, after seventeen years, one cannot fail to be struck by the calm and apostolic dignity which pervades it in every part. It is known that it cost the gentle, yet firm, mind of Pius a conflict of emotions, which inflicted on him almost anguish. His office compelled him to reply: and the answer could not be any but a censure on the conduct of a powerful state, with which he was perfectly at peace, and directions to thwart its measure, and testify to the utmost "abhorrence" for it. It was impossible for him to foresee the possible results of his decided conduct. His directions might be disobeyed, and the world might deride his innocuous blow, as though, like the feeble old Priam's,

—— "telum imbelle sine ictu."

They might be carried out, not in his spirit, and confusion and misunderstanding would arise. Or even they might be admirably obeyed, and



yet lead to collisions and conflicts, to sufferings and violence, of which the blame would probably be cast upon himself. It was painful, therefore, in the extreme, to feel obliged to issue such a document; but, upon its face, no sign can be traced of the agitation and affliction of his soul. It is impassive and dignified throughout. There are blended in it two qualities, not often combined. Its enactments are as clear and as definite as any statute could make them, without wavering, flinching, or aught extenuating: at the same time, its entire tone is conciliatory, respectful, and even friendly. To the bishops, he speaks as a father and a master: of their sovereign, he undeviatingly writes as of a fellow-monarch, an ally, and a friend. His confidence in the royal justice, fairness, and tolerance, is entire and unbounded. The character of Pius is breathed into every paragraph, his inflexibility of conscience, his strictness of principle, with his kindness of heart, and gentleness of natural disposition. Moreover, the consummate canonist is discoverable to the more learned, and this too in the line of condescension and conciliation. His successor, in 1837, commenting on this Brief, justly remarked that it "pushed its indulgence so far, that one might truly say it reached the very boundary line, which could not be

passed without violation of duty." Every one knows what a nicety in legal knowledge this requires. A well-remembered popular leader used to boast, that he trusted so confidently in his accurate acquaintance with law, that he had no fear of ever overstepping its limits, or being caught in the snares which he knew beset his path. His foot was, however, at length entangled in their meshes, his confidence had betrayed him, and his energy was irreparably broken.

Not so was it with Pius. What he had written, he had written in the fulness of a wisdom which holiness of life had matured, and an earnest sense of duty now doubly enlightened: not a word of it had to be recalled, modified, or compromised; and, though after a long struggle, it has remained an oracle and a law. But, as has been remarked, he only committed a seed to the furrow, and he lived not to pluck its bearing. For more than a year this document lay buried in some ministerial bureau at Berlin: it was then taken up, negotiated about, and cast for three more years into oblivion. What followed belongs to another Pontificate; but will not even there need fresh attention. Suffice it to say, that the scars of old wounds are healed; the Roman purple glows upon the archiepiscopal

throne of glorious Cologne, almost rebuilt under royal patronage ; the young Prince, future heir to the Prussian crown, who is about to take into partnership of its brilliancy and its burthen England's first daughter, has known, and been known by, Rome with reciprocated esteem ; while the monarch who will welcome them home has, on many occasions, given proof of his own personal feelings in favour of justice and fair-dealing towards the newer, as well as to the older, provinces of his kingdom.

Two important public incidents thus marked the commencement and the middle of this brief Pontificate: the first was joyful, the second painful ; a third and still more disastrous one preceded, perhaps prepared, its close. Like the others, it only developed its consequences in another Pontificate.

In July, 1830, took place the first of those great political earthquakes which have since become so frequent, shaking down thrones, and scattering their occupants, without war, and comparatively without the cruelties of a violent reaction. Three days formed the mystic term required for the overthrow of a dynasty : street-barricading and domiciliary slaughter were the strategy employed ; then all was over, without

guillotine or fusillades. Such were the three days, once called glorious in France, commemorated by anniversary festivities. The elder branch of the Bourbons was its victim; the work of many years' war, by confederated Europe, was overthrown in a trice; down to its favourite and tenderest shoot, it was whirled entire, by the revolutionary blast, across the sea to a second exile, but not to a second hospitable welcome. And yet the fight and the turmoil, the agitation and the waste of strength, were not even for a change of name. When the dust and smoke had cleared away, another Bourbon was on the throne; a monarch had succeeded to a monarch; a younger branch more vigorous in its offshoots, fuller of younger sap, was planted on the same spot, or rather sprang from the same trunk as the one so mercilessly lopped. It appeared as if France had not at least quarrelled with the root.

In August, the terrible lesson, easily learnt, was faithfully repeated in Brussels, and Belgium was for ever separated from Holland. To those who had witnessed the first great revolution in France, the reappearance once more, in the same country, of the quelled spirit of that event could not but be a spectacle full of terrors.

The recollection of that sanguinary period was still fresh in the memory of many. Charles X. who was expelled by the new revolution, was, after all, the brother of the king who had perished on the scaffold in the first; this alone brought the two events into a close connection. Pius VIII. had lived and suffered in one; he could not but be deeply affected by another. It was easy to foresee that examples so successful as these must encourage the discontented of other countries, and that a spark from one conflagration might suffice to set the drier materials of older dynasties in a blaze. His own dominions were not left in peace. The storm which was soon to break in all its fury, was gathering slowly and sullenly around. Soon after his accession, he renewed the edicts of his predecessor against secret societies — the Carbonari. A lodge of these conspirators was discovered in Rome, and twenty-six of its members were arrested. A special commission was appointed to try them; one was condemned to death, some others sentenced to imprisonment. The first was grand-master and chief of the conspiracy. But Pius commuted his sentence, and mercifully spared his life.

These repeated shocks abroad and at home,

to which may be added the revolution in Poland in November, and the death of his friend and ally the King of Naples, inflicted stroke after stroke on the Pope's shattered frame. The malignant humour which had affected him so long outwardly, was driven inwards upon more vital organs, and threatened, towards the end of 1830, a speedy dissolution.

In the meantime, Pius had taken a plain straightforward course. No sooner had the French revolution proved complete, and Louis-Philippe been seated firmly on his throne, than he frankly recognised his government, and confirmed the credentials of his own Nuncio. The Archbishop of Paris, Monseigneur De Quélen, a man whose virtues all must admire, demurred to even this decision, and sent an envoy to Rome, to argue the question of the new oath of fidelity, and of public prayers for the head of the State. Several other bishops likewise entertained similar conscientious scruples, and consulted the same supreme authority. On the 29th of September, the Pope addressed a most luminous and kind Brief to the Archbishop, in which he replied to his doubts, and assured him that he might safely accord both the required pledges of fidelity.

It cannot be necessary to remark, how fearfully this outbreak of revolutionary spirit, which made its first appearance in this Pontificate, was pregnant with immense results throughout the Continent; how it was only the first of successive convulsions in France; visited successively greater and lesser states, from empires to grand-duchies; and has led to more changes of dynasties, more resignations of sovereigns, more variations of national constitutions, more provisional governments, more periods of anarchy, more civil strife, more military rule, more states of siege, more political assassinations, more disturbance of international law, and more subversion of the moral bases of society, crowded and condensed into one quarter of a century, than would run diluted through the annals of any hundred years in the world's history.

The good Pope was spared the sight of all this misery. For, as the reader has seen, the beginning of this revolutionary movement seemed to cut short his valuable life. He was conscious of his approaching end, and asked to receive the Sacraments, which the highest and the lowest in the Church equally require and desire, or which rather bind us all together in an equality of helplessness and of relief. Like the food of the

body, in this, that the monarch and the beggar must both partake of it ; unlike it in this, that only one quality and one measure is there served out to both. A Pope ordains like an ordinary bishop, recites his breviary like a common priest, receives the Viaticum under one species, the same as any patient in the hospital, and goes through the humble duty of confession, generally to a simple priest, like the everyday sinner of the world. In what is believed to be supernatural, and belongs to the order of grace, he is on the level with his own children. He can give more than they, but he must receive the same.

But a trait is recorded of the dying Pius, which will justify, or illustrate, what has been said concerning the delicacy of his conscience as well as the disinterestedness of his conduct. On his death-bed, he sent for his treasurer Cristaldi, and requested him, in virtue of the powers vested in his office, to secure a small pension for life to one old and faithful domestic, who had attended him for years. He had laid by nothing himself, from which he could provide for him, and he doubted whether he had himself a right to leave the treasury burthened with this trifling personal gratuity. He expressed



his thankfulness when his request was efficiently complied with, and composed himself to rest.<sup>1</sup>

On the morning of December the first, Pius VIII. calmly breathed his last.

In the recollections of the preceding Popes, the reader will have observed one principle kept in view, which he may think has been lost sight of in the record of this third Pontificate. It has been wished to exemplify, even at the risk of being personal—which recollections must necessarily be—how individual is the influence of the Holy See upon all, however insignificant, who closely approach it. The shade of a tall and stately tree, if it be of a baneful character, blights all that is planted beneath it; while another seems to draw upwards, and to give straight, though perhaps slender, growth to what springs up under its shelter. Such is the benign and fostering protection and direction which many will have experienced in the Roman Pontiff. And, therefore, a recollection of having been brought beneath this propitious influence, is equivalent to a consciousness of having felt it. Already one conversation with Pius VIII. has been recorded, on those studies which formed the

<sup>1</sup> Chevalier D'Artaud.

writer's favourite pursuits, calculated to encourage perseverance in them. Another interview can more easily be here inserted, because it has already been published many years, and, therefore, is as much the reader's property as the author's own. The following, then, is an extract from the last of twelve Lectures, delivered in Rome in 1835, and published in London in the following year:—

“In my own case, I should be unjust to overlook this opportunity of saying that, on every occasion, but principally on the subject of these Lectures<sup>1</sup>, I have received the most condescending encouragement from those whose approbation every Catholic will consider his best reward.”

To this acknowledgment was appended the following explanatory note:—

“I feel a pleasure in relating the following anecdote. A few years ago, I prefixed to a thesis held by a member of the English College (afterwards the Right Rev. Bishop Baggs), a Latin dissertation of ten or twelve pages, upon the necessity of uniting general and scientific knowledge to theological pursuits. I took a

<sup>1</sup> Lectures on the Connection between Science and Revealed Religion.

rapid view of the different branches of learning discussed in these Lectures. The Essay was soon translated into Italian, and printed in a Sicilian journal; and, I believe, appeared also at Milan. What was most gratifying, however, to my own feelings, and may serve as a confirmation of the assertions in the text, is, that when, two days after, I waited upon the late Pope Pius VIII., a man truly well versed in sacred and profane literature, to present him, according to usage, with a copy of the thesis prepared for him, I found him with it on his table; and, in the kindest terms, he informed me, that, having heard of my little Essay, he had instantly sent for it, and added, in terms allusive to the figure quoted above from the ancient Fathers: ‘ You have robbed Egypt of its spoil, and shown that it belongs to the people of God.’ ”

This was the watering, soft and genial, of that little germ, which made it grow up, at least with the vigour of good intentions, into something more complete. Those few condescending words gave new zest to researches commenced, imparted value to what had been already gathered, and encouragement towards collecting what still lay scattered. They shed a cheerful brightness over one period of life. And that very moment

might not be unjustly considered its very mid-point. We all look back, from our lengthening desert path, upon some such green and sunlit oasis from which we started ; but, what was more, mine was then peopled and alive with kindred minds. It is then, that, on reaching back through memory to that happier time, to me

“ Occurrunt animæ, quales neque candidiores  
Terra tulit, neque queis me sit devinctior alter.”

During that brief and long-passed era of life, congenial pursuits created links of which few now remain, between the survivor and many well more worthy to have lived. Not to speak of Italy, and many great and good men who flourished there, especially in Rome, it is pleasant to remember having conversed, and sometimes corresponded, with such scholars in France as the patriarch of Oriental literature, Sylvestre de Sacy ; the rival of Grotefend and precursor of Rawlinson, Saint-Martin ; the inaugurator almost of Tartar and Mongolian learning, Abel-Rémusat ; not to mention Balbi, Ozanam, Halma, and many others : and in Germany to have been in similar relations with Möhler, Klee,—both too early taken from us,—Scholz, Schlegel, Win-dischmann the elder, and the two noble-minded

Görreses, the philosopher of the noblest faculties, and the poet of the sweetest affections.

Many others, indeed, as yet survive, to share the recollections of that period, which we hold together as a mutual bond of friendly intercourse and undeviating sympathies: but we all of us must now and then cast a "longing, lingering look behind," and turn away with a sigh, to see our old oasis still indeed green and sunny, but principally with that sheen which faith reflects upon the graves of the holy and the wise.

Part the Fourth.

GREGORY THE SIXTEENTH.









Genl. J. J. J. J.





# GREGORY THE SIXTEENTH.

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## CHAPTER I.

### HIS CONSECRATION.

“ You must now revise your own proofs. I fear I shall not have much time in future to correct them.” Such were the first words which I heard from the mouth of Gregory XVI. They were preceded by a kind exclamation of recognition, and followed by a hearty blessing, as I knelt before him in the narrow passage leading from the private papal apartments. It was only a few days after his accession. The new Pope alluded to an act of singular kindness on his part. He had desired me to expand an essay and publish it as a little work in Italian ; on a subject in which, as Prefect of Propaganda, he took an interest. It was passing through the press of that Institution, and he had undertaken to correct its sheets. Throughout the duration of the conclave, down to the very eve of his election, he had persevered in this proof of con-

descension, and thus probably spared the future reader some amount of infelicities in diction, or inaccuracies in facts. At any rate that short interview proved to me that Gregory's elevation to the Sovereign Pontificate had not altered that amiability and simplicity of character which I had already so often experienced.

The conclave after the death of Pius commenced in the middle of December, with the observance of all usual forms. At one time it seemed likely to close by the election of Cardinal Giustiniani; when the Court of Spain interposed and prevented it. Allusion has been made to the existence of this privilege, vested more by usage, than by any formal act of recognition, at least in three great Catholic Powers. Should two thirds of the votes centre in any person, he is at once Pope, beyond the reach of any prohibitory declaration. It is, therefore, when the votes seem to be converging towards some one obnoxious, no matter why, to one of those sovereigns, that his ambassador to conclave, himself a Cardinal, by a circular, admonishes his colleagues of this feeling in the court which he represents. This suffices to make them turn in another direction.

Thus in the conclave preceding the one now before us, Cardinal Severoli was nearly elected,

when Cardinal Albani, on behalf of Austria, to which Severoli had been formerly Nuncio, inhibited his election, by a note considered far from courteous. And, in like manner in this conclave, on the 7th of January, Cardinal Giustiniani received twenty-one votes, the number sufficient for election being twenty-nine, when Cardinal Marco, Spanish envoy, delicately intimated, first to Giustiniani's nephew, Odescalchi, then to the Dean Pacca, that Spain objected to that nomination. Every one was amazed. Giustiniani had been Nuncio in Spain; and the ground of his exclusion was supposed to be, his participation in Leo XII.'s appointment of bishops in South America. If so, the object in view was signally defeated. For the power possessed by the crown of any country expires by its exercise; the sting remains behind in the wound. Cardinal Cappellari had been instrumental, far more than Giustiniani, in promoting those episcopal nominations, and he united the requisite number of votes, and was Pope.

Every one in that conclave, however, bore witness to the admirable conduct of that excellent and noble prince on the occasion. I have heard Cardinal Weld, and his secretary in conclave, Bishop Riddell, describe how wretched and pining he looked while the prospect of the

papacy hung before him, for he was scrupulous and tender of conscience to excess ; and how he brightened up and looked like himself again, the moment the vision had passed away. Indeed, no sooner had the note of the Spanish lay ambassador, Labrador, been read in his presence by the Dean, than Cardinal Giustiniani rose, and standing in the middle of the chapel, addressed his colleagues. He was tall, his scanty hair was white with age, his countenance peculiarly mild. His mother was an English lady, and his family are now claiming the Newburgh peerage in Scotland, from the Crown. With an unfaltering voice, and a natural tone, unagitated by his trying position, the Cardinal said : “ If I did not know courts by experience, I should certainly have cause to be surprised at the ‘ exclusion ’ published by the most eminent Dean ; since, far from being able to reproach myself with having given cause of complaint against me to His Catholic Majesty, during my nunciature, I dare congratulate myself with having rendered His Majesty signal service in the difficult circumstances wherein he was placed.” He then referred to some proofs of acknowledgment of this fidelity from the Spanish Crown ; and continued : “ I will always cherish the memory of these kindnesses shown me by His Catholic Majesty,

and will entertain towards him the most profound respect, and in addition a most lively interest for all that can regard his welfare, and that of his august family. I will further add, that, of all the benefits conferred on me by His Majesty, I consider the greatest and most acceptable to me (at least in its effects) to be his having this day closed for me the access to the most sublime dignity of the Pontificate. Knowing, as I do, my great weakness, I could not bring myself to foresee that I should ever have to take on myself so heavy a burthen, yet these few days back, on seeing that I was thought of for this purpose, my mind has been filled with the bitterest sorrow. To-day I find myself free from my anxiety, I am restored to tranquillity, and I retain only the gratification of knowing that some of my most worthy colleagues have deigned to cast a look on me, and have honoured me with their votes, for which I beg to offer them my eternal and sincerest gratitude."

This address visibly moved the entire assembly; and many Cardinals visited Giustiniani in his cell, to express to him their admiration of his conduct and his virtues.<sup>1</sup>

Gregory XVI. gave him every proof of his

<sup>1</sup> Moroni, Dizionario, vol. xxxi. p. 221.



esteem, and after the death of Cardinal Weld, he was named Cardinal Protector of the English College, in consideration of his English descent. This gave me many opportunities of conferring with him, and learning his genuine and solid good qualities.

It would seem as if the pontifical dignity, in modern times, had to alternate between the two ecclesiastical divisions in the Church, the secular and regular. Pius VII. belonged to the latter, the two next Popes to the former class. In Cardinal Capellari a return was made to the monastic order. His three immediate predecessors had passed through certain preparatory steps; had been graced with the episcopal dignity before they reached the pontifical, had been bishops or public characters in stirring times: he had never left the cloister till he was clothed with the purple — though in his case this was but a symbolical phrase<sup>1</sup>, and after this, he only filled one, and that an ecclesiastical office. His previous life, therefore, may be easily sketched.

Bartholomew Albert Cappellari was born at Belluno, in Lombardy, September 18, 1765, of

<sup>1</sup> On becoming a Cardinal, a religious preserves the colour of his habit. That of the Camaldolese being white, Gregory XVI. never changed the colour of his robes, but wore the same as a monk, a cardinal, and pope.

parents belonging to the nobles of the place. In 1783 he took the habit of the Camaldolese order, and with it assumed the name of Maurus, in the monastery of San Michele in Murano, at Venice. In 1795 he was deputed to Rome on business, and there, in 1799, he published a large work of great merit, which gave proof of his extensive and varied learning.<sup>1</sup> In 1805 he was created Abbot, and exercised the office at the monastery of St. Gregory in Rome, and in that of his original profession at Venice. The first, however, became his place of residence.

The church and monastery of St. Gregory are beautifully situated on the Cælian Hill, and occupy the site of a religious house founded by that great Pope, in his own house. Its original dedication was to the Apostle St. Andrew, in whose honour there still exists a chapel in the garden, adorned with exquisite frescoes. Over the threshold of this house proceeded St. Augustine, and the other missionaries, whom St. Gregory sent to England. From the Benedictines it passed into the hands of the Camaldolese, a branch indeed of that religious order. The Camaldolese take their name from one of the three

<sup>1</sup> It is entitled, "Il trionfo della Santa Sede, e della Chiesa, contro gli assalti dei Novatori." It passed through three editions in Venice, and has been translated into several languages.

celebrated "Sanctuaries" of Tuscany, situated among the fastnesses of the Apennines, and remarkable for the beauties of their positions, and of the prospects around them. But the Camaldolese, founded by St. Romuald in the thirteenth century, have two forms of life, one monastic, the other eremetical. The latter has been in part described, where an account was given of the abduction, by banditti, of a community on Tusculum. It was to the monastic branch that D. Mauro Cappellari belonged. In the splendid monastery of St. Gregory the Great, he passed upwards of twenty years of quiet obscurity, enjoying the command of a rich library to which he greatly added.

But, although scarcely known to the public, he was one of the many living in Rome, who silent and unseen carry on the great business of the Church, as its counsellors, theologians, and referees in arduous affairs. In this way Father Cappellari was well known to the Holy See, and full opportunity was given him to become acquainted with ecclesiastical and even civil business, and to manifest his ability, prudence, and uprightness in its transaction. Among other grave duties, Leo XII. imposed on him those of visitor of the four lesser Universities. Those who knew his merits fully expected that he

would be soon placed in a position to display them more usefully ; when it appeared as if a friendly rival had stepped in between him and his well-earned honours.

Another religious of the same order, and from the same province, had come to Rome much later, and was his junior by several years. This was D. Placido Zurla ; a man of great learning and pleasing manners, and adorned besides with high moral qualities. But he had taken no leading part in ecclesiastical affairs in Rome, nor had he borne the weight of its evil days. His celebrity, indeed, as an author had been rather in a very different line, that of geographical research. In 1818 he had published, at Venice, an interesting work on Marco Polo and other early Venetian travellers, and he had brought to light, or at least greatly illustrated, a singular map of the world, preserved in the library of St. Mark's, which, though long anterior to the age of Columbus, seemed to give a hint of a western continent. He was the intimate friend of Father Cappellari ; and all Rome was astonished when he was named Cardinal by Pius VII. in May, 1823, not because his own merits were underrated, but because his elevation seemed to bar that of his fellow-monk. For it was supposed to be impossible that two religious should be raised

to the purple from one very limited monastic body. So Zurla felt it: and on receiving notice of his coming nomination, he is said to have proceeded to the feet of Pius, and deprecated it, as an injustice to his friend, indeed, as certainly a mistake. However, it was not so. He became Vicar of Rome, and was Protector of our College till his death in Sicily, in 1834. Not the slightest interruption of affection took place between the two religious brethren, even after the last had become first; and Zurla was vicar to Cappellari.

In fact, Leo XII. overlooked all usages, ordered a complete equipment for a cardinal to be prepared at his own charge; and the colour and form of the robes left no doubt who the unknown nominee was to be. On the 25th of March, 1825, Leo created him cardinal, but reserved him *in petto*, till March 13th of the following year, when he proclaimed him with such a eulogium as has seldom been pronounced in consistory. He spoke of him as a person "very remarkable for innocence and gravity of manners, and most learned, especially in ecclesiastical matters, and for protracted labours endured for the Apostolic See."

On the Feast of the Purification, February 2nd, 1831, an end was put to the conclave by his election to the Supreme Pontificate, by the name

of Gregory. The ceremony of his coronation, which took place on the 6th, was enhanced by his consecration as Bishop, at the High Altar of St. Peter's. This function served clearly to exhibit the concurrence in his person of two different orders of ecclesiastical power: From the moment of his acceptance of the Papal dignity, he was Supreme Head of the Church, could decree, rule, name or depose bishops, and exercise every duty of pontifical jurisdiction. But he could not ordain, nor consecrate, till he had himself received the imposition of hands from other bishops, inferior to himself, and holding under and from him their sees and jurisdiction.

On a previous occasion, when Clement XIV. was named Pope, he received episcopal consecration separately from his coronation. Gregory united the two functions; but following a still older precedent, departed from ordinary forms.

In the Roman Pontifical, the rite prescribed for episcopal consecration is interwoven with the Mass, during which the new Bishop occupies a very subordinate place till the end, when he is enthroned, and pronounces his first episcopal benediction. Here the entire rite preceded the Mass, which was sung in the usual form by the new Pope. Like every other Bishop, he recited, kneeling before the altar, and in presence of his

clergy, the Profession of Faith, the bond here which united the Head with the Body, instead of being, as ordinarily, the link which binds a member to the Head.

The morning was bright and full of joy ; the evening came gloomy and charged with sinister prognostics. It was in the very square of the Vatican, while receiving the first Papal blessing, that the rumour reached us of insurrection in the provinces. It was one of those vague reports the origin and path of which no one can trace. For it was only on the 4th that Bologna had risen. A cannonade had been heard in the direction of Modena, which was taken for a signal of premature revolution. It was that of the Grand-Duke's attack on the house of *Ciro Menotti*, who had been treated with all the kindness of a domestic friend by that monarch, while he was the very centre of a general conspiracy. His treachery was discovered, and his intentions were frustrated by the vigilance and intrepidity of the Duke, who took, and himself conveyed him away captive, where he could be better held. Soon the insurrection spread ; and, having occupied the legations, overflowed its original boundaries, and sent its forces towards the capital, where a movement was attempted with no real success.

I remember perfectly the night of February 12.

It was carnival time, of the good old days, when later restrictions had not been thought of, and every one was on pleasure bent, hearty and harmless, for the hour. On the afternoon of that day, just as the sports were going to begin, an edict peremptorily suspended them, troops patrolled the *Corso*, and other public places, and citizens were warned to remain at home, as evil-disposed persons machinated mischief. Three days before a plot had been formed for the surprise and seizure of the Fort of St. Angelo ; but it had been foiled by Government watchfulness. In the evening of the 12th some sharp reports of fire-arms reached our ears, and told us of an attempt, at least, to excite a violent revolution. It was, in truth, an attack made by an armed party on the guard of the Post-office, with the intention of seizing its arms and ammunition. But the soldiers were on the alert ; they returned the fire, wounded several, and captured many of their assailants ; and all was quiet. One ball went through the gate of the Piombino Palace, and, I believe, killed the innocuous porter within.

As for ourselves, not knowing what might happen, or in what direction the blind fury of a successful rebellion might direct itself, ignorant also of the extent and resources of the aggres-



sors, we took every precaution against any nocturnal surprise. Our doors were solid, our windows well barred, our walls impregnable. After careful survey of the premises, only one weak point was discovered, not proof against the extemporaneous engineering of tumultuary assailants; and I doubt if Todleben himself could have suggested a more scientific or more effectual way than we employed of securing it, by works hastily thrown up, against nocturnal aggression. Watch and ward were also kept up; till morning dawned on our untried defences and nodding sentinels.

Whatever may have been the feelings of the provinces, certainly Rome gave no proof of sympathy with revolution, but rather manifested enthusiastic devotion to her new sovereign. Upon the Civic Guard being enlarged, to enable the regular troops to move northward, multitudes presented themselves for enrolment; and, among these, persons of the highest class, eager to take on themselves the defence of the Pope's sacred person. Prince Altieri received the command of this body. The loyalty of the poorer classes became almost alarming. They surrounded the royal carriage in such masses, that it was scarcely possible to move through them; and they expressed their attachment and readiness to fight,

with a clamour and warmth that would have rendered any attempt to remove them a dangerous experiment.

The Pope displayed the utmost calm, fortitude, and prudence. The blow was, no doubt, to him cruel and disappointing. It served better than any symbolical ceremony, to remind him, on his coronation day, how earthly glory passeth quick away. He was yet untried, determined to devote himself to his high duties with zeal and with ability. He had every reason to hope that he should continue the peaceful career of his predecessors. There was no army worth naming kept up in the States — a burthen less, pressing on the people. Repression had never been a contemplated principle of government; military occupation had not been considered as the tenure of an ecclesiastical dynasty. There was one consolation certainly in what had just occurred. The insurrection had broken out before his election was known. It could have no personal motive, no enmity to himself. It arose against the rule, not against the ruler; against the throne, not against its actual possessor.

Neither could it be said that the revolution was a last measure, after preliminary efforts, the resource of men driven to extremity, by being denied all redress. The outburst was sudden,

though doubtless premeditated ; it aimed at the final overthrow of the reigning power, not at modifications of government. It pretended to seek, not reforms, but the substitution of a republic for the existing and recognised rule. Now let any one impartially discuss with himself, what he would have done in similar circumstances, and it will be difficult for him to arrive at a condemnation of the course pursued by Gregory. There was no question of concession, but of cession only. His governors and representatives had been driven away, and an army was forcing its way towards his capital, not to make terms, but to expel him. They were prepared to treat with him, not as aggrieved subjects, but as the supreme rulers. They were now the nation, the government ; sitting in provisional form, in provincial cities, distracted, unorganised. Was it his duty to recognise at once their claims ; and, if they proved unable to drive him from Rome, to divide his States with them, and surrender, at the bidding of at most a faction, the rich provinces over which he had just been appointed ? Or was he to yield to this violence, because, in the confidence of a paternal rule, the papacy had not kept up a disproportionate standing army during peace ?

If not, if any one similarly circumstanced

would have felt that his first duty was to secure integral possession of his rightful dominions, and to rescue the country from civil war, there was no alternative but the one adopted by Gregory, the calling to aid an allied power, especially one to whom the well-known lesson applied —

*“ Nam tua res agitur, paries cum proximus ardet.”*

That foreign assistance, especially when prolonged, is an evil, no one can doubt ; and as such none more deplored it than Gregory XVI. But there was only a choice of evils ; and surely this one was less so than anarchy and all its miseries. In fact, it is a mistake to speak of choice ; since it was a necessity without an alternative. For the outbreak itself, independent of all abstract questions, was a grievous calamity to the country. Its promoters, of course, appropriated to themselves the provincial chests, and cut off supplies from the capital, where public payments had to be made ; the additional expenses entailed by it, and the irregularities that ensued in the collection of revenues, embarrassed for a long time the public finances : a loan had to be contracted for the first time, and an external debt created ; public property had to be ruinously sold, and profitable sources of national income farmed out for a present advantage and

eventual loss; and much property belonging to ecclesiastical corporations was enfranchised and its proceeds converted into Government funds. But in the mean time payments of all sorts ran into arrears, whether dividends, salaries, pensions, or assignments; and I can speak with painful recollection of the embarrassment in which persons charged with administration of property vested in public securities soon found themselves involved, through the disturbance created by this internal derangement. It was several years before the financial current again flowed regularly and smoothly.

In the mean time the Pope was not merely calm and confident, but most active; and no one, reading the public acts of his first year of Pontificate, would imagine that it was one of intestine war, confusion, and distress. Within the month of his nomination (February 28) he preconised, as it is called, twenty-two archbishops and bishops; in the September following he published seventeen more, and named twelve cardinals, several among them men of considerable merit. In March he ordered the magnificent tunnels for the Anio at Tivoli to be commenced. He reduced the duties on salt and flour, and modified other imports; created chambers of commerce in various cities, including the metro-

polis; issued excellent laws for municipal government, and reorganised that of several provinces, raising their rank for their advantage; introduced great improvements in the Code of Procedure, criminal and civil; and established a sinking fund for the gradual extinction of the newly contracted debt.

But perhaps the most striking act of this first year of pressure and revolt was the publication of an Apostolical Constitution, which was dated August 31st, beginning "Solicitududo Ecclesiarum." It has been mentioned that Cardinal Cappellari had been the chief instrument in granting bishops to the infant republics of South America. In fact it was he whom Leo XII. had deputed in 1827 to treat with Labrador, the envoy sent by Ferdinand VII., to Rome expressly to oppose this concession. Labrador was acknowledged by all parties, and especially by the diplomatic body in Rome, to be one of the most accomplished and most able statesmen in Europe, yet he could not carry his point.

The sentiments maintained by Cardinal Cappellari as a negotiator were authoritatively proclaimed by him as Pope, in the Bull just mentioned; that the Holy See recognises governments established *de facto*, without thereby

going into the question of abstract rights. At the moment when changes were rapidly made in governments and dynasties, and when sceptres passed from hand to hand with the rapidity of magical or illusory exhibitions, it was at once bold and prudent to lay down simple principles by which the judgment of the Holy See might be easily anticipated; at the same time that it kept itself clear of all internal disputes and embarrassing appeals during actual contests.

## CHAPTER II.

## PUBLIC WORKS OF GREGORY THE SIXTEENTH.

THE recollections of this volume commenced in the nineteenth year of one Pontificate ; yet it was almost necessary to carry back the reader to eventful occurrences preceding the period of personal remembrance. They reach their term four years before the close of this fourth reign ; and, in a similar manner, I must be allowed to refer to circumstances that followed my separation from the scenes of youth and manhood.

However warlike the attitude may appear, which Gregory was compelled to assume, at the commencement of his reign, the arts which stamped it with their character, were the arts of peace. Scarcely any Pontificate has their footprints more deeply or more widely impressed on it than his. He was not content with continuing or extending what his predecessors had commenced, but he created ; that is, began from nothing, and accomplished what was wanting altogether till his time. Nor did he confine



himself to any one department of art; but his attention was comprehensive and generous, not guided by caprice, but directed by a discerning taste.

Let us begin with these higher proofs of genius. The Roman galleries were rich till his time, in masterpieces of Greek and Roman art. Indeed one only wonders how so much that is beautiful remains there after Rome has enriched the rest of the world. Unfortunately, in ancient times, many of the sculptures excavated, when the soil was for the first time upturned, were placed in the palaces or villas belonging to the family of the reigning Pope, and thereby became appropriated to its own use. Thus, the Medici Villa received those matchless statues and groups which make the Tribuna at Florence a temple of highest art, though adorned only with spoils secretly conveyed from Rome. Thus also, whatever in the Museum of Naples bears the name of Farnesian, as the Hercules and Dirce, came from the gigantic palace of that family in Rome. Let us imagine these two collections poured back into their original source, and what would the Vatican be now? Then add to the sum of Roman artistic wealth the innumerable pieces of sculpture collected or scattered in other places, and even in other parts


of the city, in the villas and palaces of Rome, in the Louvre, at Munich, in London, and it well may be said that the Eternal City has not only heaped up artistic treasures for herself, but that she has enriched with them the entire world.

With this inexhaustible mine of wealth, she had not thought of going beyond her own soil to increase her store. She watches indeed more jealously over it, and over every new discovery, and does not allow the stranger, so easily as formerly, to be a gainer by her own losses. The consequence has been most beneficial. Unable any longer to look to Italy for the accumulation of masterpieces, we have turned to the original fields where she reaped her golden harvests, to Greece and Asia, to Lycia and Halicarnassus. It was Gregory XVI. who first enlarged the boundaries of artistic collection in Rome, and brought into near connection the monuments of earlier schools, those from which it had always been supposed that the more elegant and sublime productions of Grecian taste and genius had received their first inspirations.

The discovery of Assyrian monuments has indeed materially modified these theories. Egypt can no longer claim to be the cradle of artistic Greece; no lawgiver of her future code of taste ever lurked in the bulrushes of the Nile. And

Etruscan art is no antecedent preparer or modifier of Grecian grace, it is a portion, finished and refined, of it, though corresponding with it in progressive development, from rigid archaism to unzoned luxuriance.

Gregory added to the Vatican, but kept unblended with its chaster treasures, most valuable collections of these two new classes of monuments. He began nearest home. Mention has already been made of the Etruscan discoveries commenced a few years earlier in the Papal territory. Campania had long supplied Europe with what are still called Etruscan vases, probably the same objects of commerce as figure in our customs list under the designation of "Magna Græcia ware." The Museum at Naples was rich in its collection of them ; and most other countries possessed a few specimens. North of Rome, most Etrurian cities contained local museums, in which were deposited curiosities, as they are called, picked up in the neighbourhood. Chiusi, Volterra, Cortona, and other successors of old Etruscan towns, treasured up with care the remains and evidences of their ancient taste and splendour. Sometimes an antiquarian academy or society occupied itself with researches and discussions on the spot, and published learned and useful transactions. Such are those of the



Academy of Cortona, which extend to many volumes, full of interesting matter.

But, a few years before the accession of Gregory, a rich vein of excavation had been struck into, situated outside the confines of modern Tuscany, but within the territory of ancient Etruria. The very names of Vulci, Tarquinii, and Cerae suggest to classical ears the idea of places belonging to that ancient confederation; but the names had themselves been buried, like the cities to which they belonged, under such designations as Arco della Baddia, Ponte d'Asso, or Cannino. In the last of these places, the Prince who takes his title from it, Lucien Bonaparte, made extensive researches, and drew from them an immense collection, which has found its way to the British Museum. Etruscan "diggings" became the rage; and many adventurers were amply repaid. It was not the ruins of cities that were sought, but their cemeteries. The custom of savage nations, so often prolonged into high civilisation, of providing the dead with the implements and furniture which they needed on earth, to serve them in an ideal world, that usage which suggested the slaughter of the soldier's war-steed, or of the sovereign's wife, and the burying of his armour with the first, or the putting the luck-penny into the hand of the

rich or poor, to pay his freightage to the churlish ferryman, was fully appreciated and observed by the old Italians. The tomb of a respectable person occupied the space of a cottage; its walls were painted with frescoes of banquets, games, horses, and men, of large dimensions; and within was exquisite furniture in imperishable bronze, seats, beds, lamps, and other household utensils, of the same metal, or of the more fragile but more richly laboured clay. Nor were vases their most precious contents; but gold and jewelled ornaments, entombed there in profusion, attest the wealth, the luxury, and taste of ancient races, as well as their reverence for their dead. Breast-plates elaborately wrought of purest gold, necklaces, ear-rings, bullas for children's necks, chains of elaborate patterns, all exquisitely wrought, and enriched with pearls and gems, were found even in abundance, and may serve yet as models for the goldsmith's craft.<sup>1</sup>

A glut in the market became an almost unavoidable result of this superabundance of dis-

<sup>1</sup> The East is full of fables concerning vast treasures, yet concealed in the sepulchres of monarchs, guarded by griffins or spirits. The account of David's tomb, in connection with Herod, has become almost matter of history. See Josephus, tom. i. p. 412, and p. 802, ed. Havercamp. In the second passage we are told that Herod found, not money, as Hyrcanus had, but "many gold ornaments and precious things" (κόσμον χρυσοῦ καὶ κειμηλίων πολύν).

covery. The Government of Rome, being on the spot, had the advantage of choice; and Gregory XVI. with unbounded liberality, purchased all that could be required to compose, at once, a complete collection. There was already, in the Vatican library, a most choice selection of vases; a celebrated real chariot was in the Museum, other beautiful statues in bronze, one with an inscription on the arm, were scattered about. These were brought together in a suite of ample halls, which formerly were the Cardinal Librarian's apartments, but had not been occupied for many years. It belongs to the "Hand-books" and "Guides" to give a description of this splendid collection, and its admirable arrangements. Suffice it to say, that nothing seems to have been overlooked. There is one model of a tomb, with its furniture as it was found, and there are traced copies of the frescoes, many of which fell to dust soon after contact with the air. The wonder is, how they had remained so many ages beyond its reach. That families should not have assumed that they had made rather a loan than a gift of their treasures to the dead, and, after a decent interval of mourning, have resumed possession; that domestics should not have filched them, or a fraternity of jewel, if not body, snatchers should

not have existed for sepulchral burglaries; that in the feuds between tribes, when cities were given to sack and ruin, rings snatched from the ears of matrons, and embroidered baldricks stripped from the bodies of slaughtered warriors, the ashes of the dead should have afforded protection to gold and pearls more efficaciously than horses and chariots; and finally, that during the ages of Roman dominion, when the traditions of older sepulchral rites were still preserved, or in the mediæval period, when no fable of guardian dragons terrified marauders from the plunder of Pagan graves, these mounds, visible to every eye, should have sealed up their treasures and kept them faithfully, till a better motive and a more intelligent spirit kindly transferred them to a surer custody and to admiring observation, may be truly considered one of those secondary dispensations of Providence, which make the works of man's hands, thus buried for ages, able to fructify in the social world, like the seed-corn found in Egyptian sepulchres, which has, after thousands of years, germinated and given harvests.

It was on the anniversary of his election February 2nd, 1837, that Gregory opened his Etruscan museum; two anniversaries later he inaugurated its fellow-collection, the Egyptian. It occupies the floor immediately below the first.

In one way, Rome may be said to have anticipated all other countries in gathering Egyptian monuments, and in making them known to Europe before the collections of Drovetti or Belzoni had enriched it, and in exhibiting such a class of them as no other city can hope to rival. For centuries the obelisks of Rome, prostrate or standing, had been almost the only specimens of Egyptian art known to scholars and to artists. They are now seven or eight in number, one having been erected by Pius VI. on the Quirinal, and one in my time on the Pincian, by his successor. But the great ones before the Vatican and the Lateran, the first plain, and the second richly storied, had long been objects of admiration to every traveller. Their gigantic dimensions and elegant forms, their unmanageable material and finished workmanship, whether in polish or in carving, then their preserved integrity as monoliths for so many thousands of years, and the calculation of mechanical strength and skill which it has required to extract them from their granite bed, transport them and raise them on to proportioned pedestals—a piling of Pelion on Ossa, had, perhaps more practically than anything else, given the West a notion of the precocious civilisation and huge works which so early distinguished the banks of the Nile. And, except



by the one importation of a second-class obelisk to Paris under Louis-Philippe, there has been no attempt to invade this monopoly of the Eternal City.

Besides this singular order of monuments, which cannot be brought into a collection there were other primitive Egyptian pieces of sculpture, scattered through Rome, the full value of which was not ascertained till the discovery of the Egyptian alphabet by Young and Champollion. Such, for instance, were two out of four basalt lions, which, couched at the feet of Moses, delivered well regulated jets of water from their indrawn lips into the fountain bearing that patriarch's name. They were covered with hieroglyphics, which, read by the learned F. Ungarelli, showed them to belong to a very early dynasty, and to be perhaps coeval with the Jewish law-giver himself.

These and any other such remains were replaced by less noble substitutes in their servile occupations, and were given place in the halls of the Vatican amidst other kingly monuments. But there was a third class of Egyptian, or rather pseudo-Egyptian, works, which likewise belonged exclusively to Rome. The Emperor Adrian collected in his villa at Tivoli imitations of celebrated buildings in every part of the

world. Among the rest was a "Canopus," adorned by Egyptian works, or rather by Græco-Roman sculptures reduced to Egyptian forms. The museums abounded with such monuments drawn from the ruins of the villa; and these also were withdrawn from their usurped positions, and united to their more legitimate brethren, thus producing a contrast between the white marble progeny of Western, and the dusky granite or basalt productions of Eastern, art. This union gives a local singularity to the Roman-Egyptian gallery.

Pius VII. had purchased a small but valuable collection brought from Egypt by Signor Guidi, and had placed it round a hemicycle in the Vatican, that crossed the end of the great Belvedere court, uniting its two flanks. It could only be considered as placed there temporarily, and migrated to the new quarters prepared for Ises and Anubises, Cynocephali and Scarabæi. Such was the groundwork of this new aggregation to the vast Vatican group of artistic wonders; it need not be added, that every opportunity has been embraced of increasing and perfecting the work so happily commenced. Nor can it be necessary to observe that the decoration of this, as of every other department of art-collection, is strictly in keeping with its particular object, is

here purely Egyptian, as elsewhere Etruscan or Grecian.

The Gallery of Paintings in the Vatican can hardly be designated by that name, which suggests the idea of walls covered with pictures from ceiling to wainscot, whether stretched into great lengths as in Paris or Florence, or surrounding halls as in London or Dresden. In all other collections quantity gives value, to a certain extent; and a sufficient exemplification of every celebrated school is kept in view. They are all galleries for study. At the Vatican, however, this is not the case. A few paintings, chiefly large, are hung without crowding one another, or unfairly contrasting, on ample spaces of wall, in lofty spacious apartments, three or four being indulged in the room which would elsewhere suffice for fifty or a hundred tightly fitting frames. It was not easy to place them well; and accordingly I can remember at least four situations in the immense Vatican where they have been uncomfortably situated. Gregory, in 1836, bestowed on them their present position, in which they will probably be visited for generations to come. One of the first places which they occupied was the "Appartamento Borgia," a series of ten noble halls at the palace end of the Belvidere court, painted most beauti-

fully in their ceilings by some pre-Raffaelite artists. Gregory XVI. added this magnificent range to the already vast library, and filled it with additional books. Another department of that literary treasury he particularly cherished, its Christian museum. To this he made splendid additions at his own expense; among other ways, by bestowing on it a most rare and valuable series of early Byzantine paintings, in beautiful preservation. He likewise purchased for himself, and left in the palace, the whole collection of pictures by Peters, an eminent German animal-painter<sup>1</sup>, and a man of genuine worth and simplest mind, who died at an advanced age in Rome.

It would be unfair to consider the detached paintings hung against walls as composing exclusively the Vatican gallery. One must comprehend under this title the Sixtine Chapel as the grandest specimen of Michael Angelo's masterly genius; the "Stanze" and "Loggie" as the noblest display of Raffaele's sweeter powers; St. Laurence's Chapel as a gem without a flaw, of Beato Angelico's work, set in the very centre of Raffaele's golden band; not to

<sup>1</sup> The writer possesses the only picture representing a human being which he ever painted, except Adam and Eve, of small size, in a large picture of Paradise, in which the animals were obviously the objects of his principal attention.

speaking of twenty other great artists, before and since, who have left noble works upon the vaults and walls of that grandest of palaces. It was Gregory XVI. who thought of arresting the progress of decay in some valuable portions of these sublime works. So little consciousness was there of their inimitable powers in the greatest artists, that they did not think of sheltering their works from the most inevitable causes of destruction; they painted in the open portico, where rain and sun would play alternately, as if they took it for granted that whatever they did must of course perish, to be replaced by other men, as gifted as themselves. It has always been the same. What Greek sculptor expected his marbles — brittle to the touch of any boy's pebble, defaceable under long exposure to the elements — to be placed within the shelter, and not as soon erected on the roof, of a temple? So, when too late, the frescoes of Raffaele, and the arabesques and stuccoes of his pupils, were found to have been almost lost, — indeed, preserved only by early copies and engravings. Gregory, however, continued the work of preservation, before and since carried on, of enclosing the whole of the Loggie with glass, after having had the frescoes of the upper corridor admirably restored by Professor Agricola.

It was natural to expect that, however vast the Vatican might be, it could not suffice for the unceasing inpouring of new museums, as well as of individual objects of artistic merit. It had overflowed already, and Gregory had made its very gardens precious by the multitudes of statues, vases, and altars with which he had embellished them; for he may be said to have entirely renewed them, or even to have laid them out afresh. It was found necessary to devote some other large building to the purpose of containing works which the Vatican and Capitol either could not contain, or could not suitably harbour; for new discoveries or acquisitions had been made of statues and other works that deserved conspicuous places, and would not brook collocation among inferior productions. Such was the beautiful Antinous, purchased from the Braschi Palace, rescued from Russian possession by the right of pre-emption reserved to the Government: such the sublime Sophocles, the rival or equal of the Naples Aristides, discovered and given to the Pope, in 1839, by the family of the present Cardinal Antonelli. But what, perhaps, primarily demanded extensive accommodation was an immense mosaic pavement representing worthies of the cestus, eminent boxers and wrestlers in their day, natives

of Tuscan cities, which were proud, one may suppose, of their sons' thews and sinews. These heroes of the ring have thus been suddenly restored to fame, and are likely to obtain a second immortality, if one may use the phrase, more enduring than the first. Their proportions are colossal, and as they stand full-lengths in separate compartments, it required no restricted space to stretch them forth in their original position.

The Lateran Palace, a noble pile, had long stood untenanted, except, for a time, as a receptacle for paupers. The treasurer, Monsignor Tosti, had thoroughly repaired it, and restored it to its primeval beauty; yet it was insufficient and ill-situated for a Papal residence. The "Ædes Lateranæ," — confiscated under Nero, celebrated by poets and historians as most sumptuous, given by Maxentius to Constantine as his daughter's dowry, and by Constantine, with its adjoining basilica, to be the episcopal palace and cathedral of Christian Rome, — were admirably adapted for the purpose of a new, not merely supplementary, museum. The first evidence of fitness was, that the huge *Palæstran* mosaic carpeted one of its halls, as if it had been bespoke for the purpose of some ancient tessellator. And so were separate shrines found there for masterpieces, and

galleries or chambers for lesser works, one of which is a copy in mosaic of a celebrated floor-painting described by Pliny as existing at Pergamus, and representing an "unswept pavement" after supper. Gregory XVI. was the founder of this new museum, which under the present Pope has received not only a greater development, but in some respects a distinct destination, as a depository of Christian sculptures.



## CHAPTER III.

## EVENTS OF GREGORY'S PONTIFICATE.

EVERY state or government presents two distinct aspects and conditions, one internal, another external. In this it is like any other association, any family, any individual. We know little or nothing of what is going on within the circle of persons next door to us, of the struggles, or jars, or privations, or illnesses, or afflictions, or of the domestic joys, affections, and pleasures inside any house but our own. There is a hidden life too in every separate being that composes each homely circle, impenetrable to the rest of its members. No one can read the thoughts, unravel the motives, map the mind, block out the desires, trace the intentions of others with whom he has lived for years in contact. Hence we must needs be content to act with them according to the form in which they show themselves, and in the proportion that we require one another's co-operation.

Is it not so with kingdoms and principalities ? What do we know of the internal policy, the

yearly growth, the daily actions of rulers and people, in states especially that have not attained an influential prominence. For the readers of newspapers, volumes are daily prepared of home-stirring information, to be eagerly devoured: how much will have an interest beyond the hawser's length that moors the Dover packet? Who will care in France or Germany what illustrious guests the Sovereign entertained sumptuously yesterday at her table; or who spoke at the last Bradford or Wolverhampton Reform meeting? Their very names defy spelling or pronunciation beyond the channel. And so how little do we inquire what is going on, for example, in Hesse-Homburg or Reuss; or who troubled himself about "the Principalities," or their interior affairs, till their outward life came into close contact with those of other governments? As a matter of course, it is impossible for those who are absorbed in their own interests, and fully occupied with their own internal concerns, to penetrate into the real feelings, or invest themselves with the circumstances, that belong to another nation, perhaps even of different race.

Like any other country, Rome has its twofold existence. Of its exterior action, of the part which it openly takes in European politics, of its treaties, its tariffs, its commerce, of course every

one may judge, and has probably data on which to attempt at least to judge. But it is more than improbable that the real condition of the country, the character of its laws, the sentiments of the mass of people, will be no better known than are those of other states, beyond the interior sphere which they affect. No one can for a moment believe that the occasional, and too evidently partisan, communication to a newspaper constitutes the materials upon which an accurate judgment can be formed, while no trouble is taken to ascertain the statistical, financial, moral, or social state of the country, the administration of the state, or the inward changes gradually introduced. Yet, while such indifference is manifested concerning the interior state of other sovereignties, no such reserve is permitted about Rome, and it seems to be imagined that it is within everybody's power to discover evils there and to prescribe their remedy. There surely is a very different reason for this interest than ordinary philanthropy, nor does it need to be defined.

Let us take Rome for what it is, a State recognised by all Europe, as governed, for high and important reasons, by an ecclesiastical Ruler, and then further assuming that he is no more expected than any other Head of a realm to

commit suicidal acts against himself or his authority, nor to yield to the desires or attempts of those who plan and desire the overthrow of both, we may surely consider him a good sovereign who devotes the whole of his mind and energies to the happiness of his subjects, endeavours to effect improvements in every department of state, and in every part of his dominions. Now, certainly, no monarch ever did more conscientiously labour, body and soul, for the good of those committed to him, and for the discharge of his public duties, than the virtuous Gregory XVI.

It has been mentioned, that in the very year of his accession he published new laws on the course of judicial procedure. In the following year he issued another decree on crimes and punishments. In 1833 he reorganised the Secretary of State's office, dividing it into two departments, of Home and Foreign Affairs; and further gave a new system to the department of Public Works.

In 1834 a national bank was established for the first time in Rome; and a complete code was published of laws and regulations for all public administration. The year following, a new coinage was issued more perfectly reduced to the decimal system than before; as the gold coins previously bore no proportion to it. The

entire Roman Forum was thoroughly restored; and the monastery of St. Gregory, a conspicuous public edifice, with the space and roads round it, was repaired and beautified at the Pope's own expense. Very large public works were also executed at the mouth of the Tiber, and in the harbour and city of Civita Vecchia. The Anio was sent this year also through its two new tunnels; and finally a cemetery which had been commenced outside the walls, at the basilica of St. Lawrence, was finished and opened; burial in it being made compulsory, and intramural sepulture being suppressed. In 1836 night-schools were first established.

The year 1837 was a dark one in the annals of Gregory's pontificate. The cholera had visited several parts of the States, and had been particularly severe in Ancona. The Pope succoured liberally from his own funds, as well as from public sources, every place attacked; but, at the same time, he omitted no precautionary measures in his capital. It would be superfluous to say that every religious act of expiation was duly performed. There were sermons in many churches, exhorting the people to repentance, that so the Divine wrath might be appeased, and the scourge averted. Then there was a solemn procession, in which the Holy Father

walked. But some questioned the prudence of thus assembling crowds together, and the events seemed partly to justify them. A sanitary commission was formed towards which the Pope largely subscribed. Supernumerary hospitals were sought: the English College was unreservedly offered to the authorities, with the services of its inmates to attend the sick. The building was surveyed, and accepted as an hospital for convalescents; but this did not require any help from the students, who, being obliged to leave the house, retired to their Tusculan villa.

There we were regularly in a state of siege. Every town and village exercised to the utmost municipal rights, and surrounded itself with a sanitary cordon, which was as jealous of foreign approach as the dragon guardian of the Hesperides. Hence all communication between neighbouring hamlets was cut off, and it was only by stealth that the capital itself could be visited. In our own village we organised a committee of health, composed of natives and of English; every room in every house was visited, cleaned, and white-washed where needful; every nuisance abated; wholesome provisions furnished to all in need; and, as medical attendance is at the public charge in all Roman communes, we supplied medicines free-cost. Thus we kept our

dear village of Monte Porzio healthy and cheerful, while within doors we provided ample means of recreation for ourselves and the more intelligent inhabitants.

The Pope remained at his post in Rome, attending to everything, bestowing large alms, and providing for every want. Thus at length the scourge passed by, the avenging angel sheathed his sword, after raising the mortality of the twelvemonth (between Easter and Easter) from three to twelve thousand deaths. New duties then arose. The Holy Father put himself at the head of the subscriptions for educating the numerous orphans left destitute by the plague. Charity was here universal. The English College, like many other institutions, undertook the support of two children. Houses were opened, by charitable contributions, for those who remained; and among the most active and conspicuous agents in this merciful work was our countrywoman the Princess Borghese, erst Lady Gwendeline Talbot, daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury, a rarely gifted lady, whose memory yet lives in Rome in the prayers of the poor, and the admiration of the great. It may be added that the statistics of the cholera have no where been compiled with greater accuracy and minuteness than in Rome.

In spite of these anxious cares, this year saw its important improvements. Besides the opening of the Etruscan museum, and the enlargement of the Christian collection, both already mentioned, and the complete restoration of the Pauline Chapel in the Vatican, there was established, for the first time in the Roman States, a general insurance company, embracing insurance against hail as well as fire.

The year 1838 was remarkable for one of the most interesting antiquarian discoveries of modern times. The gate known as the Porta Maggiore, from its vicinity to the church of S. Maria Maggiore, passes under a magnificent point of union of several aqueducts, adorned with a splendid inscription. But the gate had been fortified by most barbaric works in the middle ages. These hideous appendages were ordered to be removed, and the consequence was, not only the unveiling of the fine old work above the gate, but the unburying of a monument singular in its construction and in its mystery. An excrescent bastion at the outside of the gate was subjected to excision, and disclosed in the process that its core was an ancient tomb, of republican times, built with strange materials. It had been raised by Marcus Vergilius Eurysaces to his nameless wife; and, as he was



a rich baker, for he was a public contractor (*redemptor*), he called the tomb a bakery (*pistrinum*), and built up its walls of stone kneading-troughs, surmounted by reliefs which represent the whole process of making bread.

But another curious appearance no less astonished Rome,—this was the arrival of two Ottoman ambassadors: the first, Ahmed Fethi Pasha, on his way to Paris; the second, one since more renowned, Redschild Pasha, minister of Mahmoud II. in London, who came to thank the Pope for his kindness to his colleague. I remember a saying of one of these intelligent Turks, when he was shown the Pantheon, and told what it formerly was. “Where,” he asked, “are the statues of the heathen gods?” “Of course they were removed when the temple was christianised,” was the natural answer. “No,” he replied; “I would have left them standing, to show how the true God had triumphed over them in their own house.”

It was in this year also that the Vatican library received the addition of ten rooms.

Besides many great public works, some already mentioned, the year 1839 was signalised by the publication of a remarkable document, the Bull “*In supremo apostolatus fastigio*” (Dec. 3) against the slave-trade. There can

be no doubt that in several countries this splendid decree did more to put down the slave-trade than negotiations or corvettes. It contains a most interesting account, by way of recital, of the untiring activity of former popes to put an end to the infamous traffic.<sup>1</sup> Of this I was assured by several natives of those countries.

This year witnessed perhaps the most splendid function which the Church ever performs, the canonization of five saints. Many years of severe investigation and judicial processes are required to prepare for this final and solemn recognition of sublime holiness in any of God's chosen servants. Only a few times in a century — twice, so far, in this — does it fall to the lot of a Pontiff to perform it. The entire basilica of St. Peter is superbly decorated and brilliantly illuminated; paintings of great events in the lives of the glorified persons adorn it in every part. All the bishops of the Papal States, and many from other parts of Italy, and even from more distant countries, usually attend. These are united in one magnificent procession: and on this occasion I remember one venerable grey-headed man who supported the pendant of St. Alphonsus Liguori's

<sup>1</sup> Thus St. Wolstan's preaching prevailed more for the same purpose with the Bristol merchants than royal prohibitions.

banner; he was the saint's nephew, and had been confirmed by him.

The following year, 1840, closes all personal recollections of this excellent Pontiff, except during a short visit of a few weeks two years later. For in this year it was thought advisable to increase the number of bishops in England, by subdividing the four apostolic vicariates established in the reign of James II., so as to double their number. In fact this had become a matter of absolute necessity. For example, the northern vicariate comprised not only the four counties usually designated by that epithet, but Lancashire and Yorkshire besides. Since this first distribution of episcopal jurisdiction, cities and towns, like Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, and Newcastle, had arisen from secondary rank to the dimensions of capitals, without mentioning innumerable other manufacturing places, or rather districts, composed of clusters, or chains formed by busy seats of industry, with a growing population.

Four new bishops were accordingly named; and, in addition to these, the writer was appointed to the subordinate situation of coadjutor or assistant to one already in possession of a see with residence at Wolverhampton, the venerable Bishop Walsh. It was a sorrowful evening, at

the beginning of autumn, when, after a residence in Rome prolonged through twenty-two years, till affection clung to every old stone there, like the moss that grew into it, this strong but tender tie was cut, and much of future happiness had to be invested in the mournful recollections of the past.

*“ Cum subit illius tristissima noctis imago,  
Quæ mihi supremum tempus in urbe fuit,  
Cum repeto noctem qua tot mihi chara reliqui,  
Labitur ex oculis nunc quoque gutta meis.”*

In the chronological sketch here given only a few occurrences of each year have been selected, sufficient to show how intent Gregory XVI. was upon steady improvement. It would be easy to multiply examples, even of material progress, honourable to his pontificate. The first steamers that struggled against the chafed and eddying Tiber made their appearance during it; and though in his old age he would not embark in the still slowly progressing undertaking of railways, he always said that his successor must perforce involve himself in their more rapid extension.

For those in one country, whose improvements naturally take their given direction, to scorn others because they follow another equally congenial to them, and lead their scoffers on in

their turn, is surely narrow and ungenerous. With boundless resources and infinite advantages, England has her definite career of progress, and may leave every other country far behind. On the other hand, it is but lately that she has awakened to her own deficiencies in whatever relates to the beautiful arts. Italy gladly yields the palm to her in all the former; admires, studies, and strives, with far more limited means, sometimes too subserviently, to copy. But it does not jeer her, in return, for her backwardness in just becoming conscious of her artistic imperfection, nor for her somewhat awkward ways of trying to repair it. Let there be, not so much forbearance as mutual commendation, meted out by the equitable standard of effort rather than of success. For the first is the measure of the will, the second of the power; the one belongs to man, the other more strictly to Providence. That may be of instantaneous formation and of immediate growth, this may require or may have required centuries to mature. The former can be equal in many, the latter is of necessity unequally distributed. On these just principles, it will be found that much more has been done by peaceful and gradual advance than could have been effected by the fitful and violent shocks of revolutionary propulsions.

## CHAPTER IV.

SOME OF THE REMARKABLE MEN OF GREGORY THE  
SIXTEENTH'S PONTIFICATE.

DURING so long a reign as that of Gregory it was naturally to be expected that some persons of more than usual distinction would adorn his court and city; for it has been the time-respected privilege of both to attract from without, as well as nurture at home, men of genius, learning, and singular virtue.

Two remarkable instances may be given of this attractive power; the one connected with, the other independent of, religion; yet both exhibited in the same race. While it must be confessed that the native school of painting has clung unreasonably as yet to the classical style, and sought its subjects in heathen mythology as most exuberantly lending itself to the luxuries of art, there has lived for a long period in the midst of it a school of foreign Christian painting, born and bred in Rome itself. Nay, we may even say that the entire religious art of modern Germany, not excluding Düsseldorf itself, owes its happy

birth to that nursery of every art. Many years ago, several young German artists — would that they still were young! — associated themselves in Rome to draw and paint, taking for their models the purer and sweeter types of earlier periods, when religion walked hand in hand with the three great sisters, whose badges are the pencil, the chisel, and the compasses; or rather when they followed her as willing handmaids. While yet comparatively unknown they executed a joint, yet separate, work, by painting in fresco, as in old times, vault and walls, with all their accessories, in three halls in the Massimo Villa, at the Lateran. Each took one apartment, and with it one division of Dante's golden art-poem; so that the *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso* furnished the exclusive theme of each contribution. To this day the works retain their freshness, and may well rank among the most beautiful of modern performances, though little seen and known by travellers.

Of this generous trio, intrepid rather, in breaking through modern feeling in art, only one settled, and has reached his maturity, in Rome, the honoured and venerated Overbeck. Cornelius was another, who has left indelible proofs of his genius at Munich and Berlin. Veith, I think, was the third, the father too of a

Christian school at Frankfort. In Rome, Overbeck's influence has been ever beneficial, especially among his own countrymen. There is a fraternity of German artists in Rome, who devote themselves to Christian painting; and one is glad to say receive much, if not most, of their encouragement from English patrons. And in Germany it will be found that every local school of similar principles springs from a master who, directly or indirectly, has been formed at Rome. The venerable Baron von Schadow, President of the eminently religious school of Düsseldorf, as well as his brother, a distinguished sculptor, was for some years an inhabitant of that city.

Side by side was another purely scientific association, composed of Germans, and having its seat on the Tarpeian Rock. It was first founded during the embassy of Chevalier Bunsen, and was under the auspices of the Prussian court and government, which subsidised it liberally. It held its meetings, published its bulletins, and larger annual collection of essays, with valuable engravings, on every antiquarian topic.

If foreigners from beyond the Alps thus came spontaneously to Rome, to seek occupation for their genius or industry, we cannot be surprised if religion or ecclesiastical tastes brought many from other parts of Italy, as well as from abroad,



to settle there for life. Such, for instance, is the learned F. Theiner of the Oratory, a Silesian by birth, now engaged on two gigantic works, each sufficient for the literary employment of one man at least; the continuation of Baronius's *Annals of Ecclesiastical History*, and the complete collection of all documents relative to the Council of Trent. Yet he contrives, almost yearly, to bring out several volumes of inedited matter from the archives of the Vatican, over which he presides; making now that treasury of hidden documents as prolific as its superincumbent library has been for years, in the untiring hands of Cardinal Angelo Mai.

Another foreigner came to Rome in this Pontificate, of whom many readers will have heard, in one of what may be called two such extremes of life as seldom meet in one person. Those whose memory does not carry them back beyond the days of Waterloo may have found, in Moore's politico-satirical poems, mention of a person enjoying a celebrity similar to that possessed more lately by a French Count resident in London, as a leader of fashion, remarkable at the same time for wit and accomplishments. Such was the Baron Géramb, in the days "when George the Third was king." But some may possibly remember a higher renown gained by him, beyond that of

having his last bon-mot quoted in the morning papers. Being an alien, though neither a conspirator nor an assassin, he was ordered to leave the country, and refused. He barricaded his house, and placarded it with the words "Every Englishman's house is his castle," in huge letters. He bravely stood a siege of some duration, against the police of those days, and drew crowds round the house; till at length, whether starved out by a stern blockade, or overreached by Bow-street strategy, he either yielded at discretion, or was captured through want of it, and was forthwith transferred to a foreign shore.

So ends the first chapter of the public life of the gallant and elegant Baron Géramb, the charm of good society, to which by every title he belonged. What became of him after this? Did that society, on losing sight of him, ask any more? Probably few of those who had been entertained by his cleverness, or amused by his freaks, ever gave him another thought; and a commentator on Thomas Moore, encountering the "whiskers of Géramb" in one of his verses, might be at a loss to trace the history of their wearer. Certainly those ornaments of his countenance would have lent but slight assistance in tracing him in after life.

Many years later, in the reign of Gregory XVI.,

let the reader suppose himself to be standing on the small plateau shaded with ilex, which fronts the Franciscan convent above Castel-Gondolfo. He is looking down on the lovely lake which takes its name from that village, through an opening in the oaken screen, enjoying the breeze of an autumn afternoon. He may see, issuing from the convent gate, a monk, not of its fraternity, but clothed in the white Cistercian habit, a man of portly dimensions, bestriding the humblest but most patriarchal of man-bearing animals, selected out of hundreds, his rider used to say, to be in just proportion to the burthen. If the stranger examines him, he will easily discern, through the gravity of his look, not only a nobleness of countenance, and through the simplicity of his habit, not merely a gracefulness of demeanour, which speak the highly-bred gentleman, but even visible remains of the good-humoured, kind-hearted, and soldierly courtier. There lurks still in his eye a sparkling gleam of wit suppressed, or disciplined into harmless coruscations. Once when I met him at Albano, he had brought as a gift to the English Cardinal Acton, a spirited sketch of himself and his "gallant grey" rolling together in the dust. When I called on him at his convent, he showed me an Imperial autograph letter, just received, an-

nouncing to him the gallantry and wounds of his son, fighting in Circassia, and several other royal epistles, written in the pleasant tone of friend to friend.

Yet he is thoroughly a monk of the strictest order known in the Church, living in a cell, without an object of luxury near him, sleeping on a straw pallet, occupied in writing, reading, meditating on holy things, devout in prayer, edifying in conversation. Among other works of his overflowing with piety is one peculiarly tender, "My Saviour's Tomb." The good old monk had been to Jerusalem, and had manifested his affections by a novel and exquisite prodigality, borrowed in idea from a certain woman who had been a sinner in the city. He anointed the sepulchre of our Lord with the most costly of perfumes, the attargul or otto of roses as we call it, so that the whole house was filled with its fragrance.

Such is the Père Géramb; such the second chapter of his known life.

What had been the intermediate hidden stage? When expelled, happily for him, from England, he very soon fell into the enemy's hands, I know not how. But he happened to be cast into the same prison, I think Vincennes, where the good Cardinal De Gregorio was also in bonds. He

was first struck by the patience and virtues of his fellow-captive, and gradually entered into conversation with him. The result was a change of heart and a change of life. Liberty soon put the sincerity of both to the severest test. Baron Géramb remained attached to the land of his captivity: in it he joined the fervent and austere life of La Trappe. After some years he was sent to Rome, as resident procurator of the order, where I had the pleasure of knowing him. Several amusing anecdotes mingle with his memory, to show how even in his sackcloth and ashes lived his wonted fire.

Among those whom Gregory deservedly called to the highest honours in Rome, was that amiable prodigy Cardinal Joseph Mezzofanti. When, after the revolution, the city of Bologna sent a deputation to renew its fealty to the Pope, it wisely named as one to compose it, Professor Mezzofanti. The Pope, who had not known him before, and was charmed with him, gave him the rank of Prelate, and shortly after brought him to Rome, to reside there permanently. He named him first Warden of the Vatican Library, that is in truth librarian,—this title being then reserved to a Cardinal—and in February, 1838, raised him to the Cardinalitial dignity.

The name of this eminent man is too well

known throughout Europe, for it to require any eulogium here. Moreover, a most accurate and full life of him has been compiled by one who has spared no pains or research to make the biography complete. I allude to the Very Rev. Dr. Russell, President of St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, to whom I have transferred my little stock of anecdotes and information concerning my good and gifted friend. Having made this sacrifice to the desire of another, whom I may describe by the very same terms, I will not anticipate here what will be adorned by the graceful pen of this biographer. I will only say, that I can attest his perfect utterance and expression in the few languages with which I happen to be acquainted, and that I have heard natives of almost every country in Europe and Asia, not to mention California, who have borne witness in my presence to his perfection in accent and phrase, when speaking their various languages. The general observation used to be, that they would have easily taken him for a native each of his own country.

This magnificent gift of universal speech was not thrown away in any sense. It was habitually employed in good, in instructing and assisting spiritually many who, without him, might have remained ignorant or helpless. Though it

was natural that he should be fond of conversing in his many languages, I should doubt if ever it was done from love of display; for he was humble and shrinking on every occasion. Indeed he knew his powers to be a gift rather than an acquisition. His appearance certainly did not bear the seal of his high intellectual mark; for his learning on all subjects was accurate, extensive, and solid. The countenance, which was the dial to the busy and complicated works above it, was not ample, or noble in its traits. His brow was a problem to phrenologists: though his eyes were heavily pressed outwards by what they may have considered lingual faculties. One of this order once told him gravely that he had great facility in learning languages. "But then," Mezzofanti archly added in telling me this wise discovery, "he knew that I was already acquainted with fifty." Most amiable too he was, simple and childlike, charitable to excess, and ready to help any one with head or hand.

At the period of the late republic, he remained in Rome when most of his colleagues retired; his constitution, shaken by age and infirmities, was probably further enfeebled by mental sufferings proceeding from the events of the times: he sunk and died March 12th, 1849. In the brief record of his life given in what may be

called the Roman "Court Guide," though it does not extend to ten lines, there is a word wanting, the omission of which does not occur in any other such summary for thirty years. Wherever a cardinal may have died, even if it was at a village in the Terradi Lavoro, he is stated to have been "laid in state" (*esposto*) and buried in the church of the place; if in Rome, in his own "title." Of Mezzofanti alone this is not said. Yet he died during a commonwealth which proclaimed that genius and virtue were to be honoured in all, wherever found. Did his high dignity, though adorned by every virtue, without a drawback, deprive him of a claim to his share of that boasted impartial homage? Such an exception suffices to throw doubts, at least, on the sincerity of those professions.

When Cardinal Weld passed to a better life, his successor was in every body's mouth, nor could it have been otherwise. There was only one person qualified in every respect for the dignity. This was Monsignor Charles Acton, the only Englishman who, in our times, has gone through that regular course of preparation which leads most naturally to the purple. For though of an English family, it was one well known for a long connection with Naples; where the future cardinal was born, March 6th, 1803. His education,



in Rome, after the cardinalate, that of Auditor of the Apostolic Chamber. Probably it was the first time that so responsible a post, generally conferred on a prelate of great judicial experience and of long standing, had been offered to a foreigner. Acton refused it, but was obliged to yield to a sovereign command. This office is considered as necessarily leading to a place in the Sacred College; so that when Cardinal Weld died in the April following Acton's promotion, it could hardly be matter of conjecture that his turn was not far distant.

The death of his elder brother, Sir Ferdinand Acton of Aldenham in Salop, brought him to England in 1837, for a short time, in order to settle family affairs, which he did in the most generous manner. He was proclaimed Cardinal January 24, 1842, having been created nearly three years previous. His health, never strong, soon began to decline; a prolonged attack of ague weakened him till he was unable to shake it off, and he sought refuge, first at Palermo, then in Naples, his native city. But it was too late: and he expired there, June 23, 1847.

Many who saw him knew little of his sterling worth. So gentle, so modest, so humble was he, so little in his own esteem, that his solid judgment, extensive acquirements, and even

more ornamental accomplishments, were not easily elicited by a mere visitor or casual guest. It used to be said by those who knew him in early youth, that his musical powers and genial wit used to form, combined, an inexhaustible fund of innocent cheerfulness ; and certainly his countenance seemed to have retained the impression of a natural humour that could have been easily brought into play. But this was over-ruled by the pressure of more serious occupation, and the adoption of a more spiritual life. The soundness of his judgment and his legal knowledge were fully recognised by the bar, for it was familiarly said by advocates of the first rank, that if they could only know M. Acton's view of a case, they could make sure of what would be its ultimate decision. In like manner, when he was officially consulted on important ecclesiastical business, and gave his opinion in writing, this was so explicit, clear, and decisive, that Pope Gregory used to say, that he had never occasion to read anything of his twice over. The greatest proof which the Pope could well have given him of his confidence was to select him, as he did, to be his interpreter and only witness, in the important interview between him and the late Emperor of Russia. Of what took place at it, not a word was ever breathed by the

Cardinal beyond this, that, when he had interpreted the Pope's first sentence, the Emperor turned to him in the most respectful and finished manner, and said, "It will be agreeable to me if your Eminence will act as my interpreter also." Immediately after the conference, to which allusion will have to be made later, Cardinal Acton wrote down, at the Pope's request, a minute account of it ; but he never allowed it to be seen.

The King of Naples came to Rome principally to provide a good bishop for his metropolis, and pressed acceptance of the see on Cardinal Acton, who, however, inexorably refused it. When a lamentable accident deprived the then reigning family of France of its first-born, I well remember that the bereaved mother wrote to him as a friend, in whom she could confide, to tell her griefs and hopes, and obtain through him what could alleviate her sorrows.

As to his charities, they were so unbounded, that he wrote from Naples, that he had actually tasted the distress which he had often sought to lighten in others. He may be said to have departed hence in all the wealth of a willing poverty.

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## CHAPTER V.

## CARDINAL ANGELO MAI.

AMONG the worthies of this Pontificate is one who deserves a separate chapter, though it shall not be longer than is absolutely necessary for a very slight sketch. This is Cardinal Mai, the discoverer of more lost works, and the transcriber of more ancient manuscripts, sacred and profane, than it has fallen to any one else's share, in modern times, to publish. It may be premised that his real biography has yet to be written.

In the province of Bergamo, part of the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom, is a little mountain village named Schilpario. Here, on the 7th of March, 1774, was born the subject of this brief memoir, who by his will enriched his heirs, "the community of the poor" of his native village. A member of the suppressed order of Jesuits was his first preceptor, and the guide to his future fame. This was Luigi Mozzi, under whose direction, in the episcopal seminary at Bergamo, he made rapid progress in classical

and modern letters. Suddenly, with four school-fellows, he left his native country and repaired to Colorno, in the Duchy of Parma, where Ferdinand of Bourbon, with the consent of Pius VI., had permitted that Society to establish themselves. He joined the order in 1799, and continued his studies with such success that, in 1804, he was sent to Naples as Professor of Belles-Lettres.

From Naples he went to Rome for a short time, and thence to Orvieto, at the special desire of its bishop, John Baptist Lambruschini. There he remained some years in retirement, and received the priesthood. Under the tuition of Fathers Manero and Monchaca, Spanish ex-Jesuits, he made great progress, not only in the ancient languages, Hebrew included, but in that art, likewise, of palæography, which had to win him his highest honours. But, as of old under Augustus Cæsar, there went forth an imperial and imperious edict, that every subject of the "Italian kingdom" should betake himself to his native province. In obedience to it Mai, accompanied by his Mentor, Mozzi, proceeded to Milan.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He had quitted the Society, scarcely established any where, with the full consent and approbation of its superiors; especially of the venerable and saintly F. Pignatelli.

It was a providential journey ; and Mai had reason to thank Napoleon for his stern mandate. And so, perhaps, has the "republic of letters," whatever hostility that title may imply to all despotic commands. Mozzi, fully acquainted with the powers and acquirements of his pupil, had him named a doctor of the Ambrosian library. The magnificent collection of manuscripts, which form its chief treasure, is mainly due to the munificence of Cardinal Frederick Borromeo, nephew and almost rival of the great St. Charles. He sent learned men all over the world to purchase manuscripts, or have them diligently copied. Among other sources of additional literary wealth had been the famous monastery of Bobbio, founded by the Irish St. Columbanus in the seventh century, the manuscripts of which had been divided between the Ambrosian and the Vatican libraries.

The period for the study of manuscripts might be said to have passed ; at least, in the noblest sense of the word. The known manuscripts of some given author, the twenty Homers, or the five Demostheneses, or the two hundred Testaments, which a great library was known to possess, might be looked through twice in a century for a new edition, "coll. Codd.," or "Cum variantibus Lectionibus ex Codd. MSS."

But the hunt after new, or rather old, works of ancient authors, in the manuscript-rooms and libraries, was quite as much given up as falconry in the modern chase. To revive it was reserved to Angelo Mai. He found in the Milanese library an unexplored mine. No doubt its manuscripts had been catalogued, perhaps described, and that accurately. But those who had preceded him had only cultivated the upper soil in this literary field. They had not discovered the exuberantly precious "royalties" which lay hidden beneath the surface. Under the letter of the writing there slumbered a spirit which had long lain there spell-bound, awaiting a master-magician to free it: a spirit of poet sometimes, sometimes of eloquence; a Muse of history, a genius of philosophy, a sprite of the merest unsubstantial elegance.

To drop figures, the peculiarity of Mai's wonderful discovery consisted in the reading of manuscripts twice written; or, as they are more scientifically called, palimpsests.<sup>1</sup> A book, for instance, may have been very properly catalogued as containing the commentaries or sermons of some abbot of the eleventh or twelfth century, works of which there may be several

<sup>1</sup> From the vellum having been scraped again, to prepare it for a second writing.

other transcripts in the library. Edited or not, it is improbable that the volume has been, or will be, looked into during a generation. But the lens-like eye of a Don Angelo peers into it, and it becomes a treasure-trove. The writer of the middle ages had taken down from the shelves a work which he considered of small value — perhaps there were duplicates of it — some letters, for instance, of a heathen emperor to his tutor, and had scrubbed, as he thought, the parchment clean both of its inky and of its moral denigration, and then had written over it the recent production of some favourite author. It is this under writing that Mai scanned with a sagacious eye ; perhaps it was like the lines of a repainted canvass, which in course of time came through the more evanescent tints superadded, a leg or arm cropping out through the mouth of an impassioned head by the second artist ; and he could trace clearly the large forms of uncial letters of the fourth or fifth century, sprawling through two lines of a neatly written brevier. Or the scouring had been more thoroughly done ; and then a wash of gallic acid revived the pallid reed-strokes of the earlier scribe.

Ingenuity, patience, learning, and immense perseverance were requisite for the process. Often



only unconnected passages were found, half a sentence in one page, which the next did not continue, but the rest of which might perhaps be found in another manuscript three hundred numbers off; sometimes portions of various works were jumbled together under one later production, upside down, back to back like shuffled cards, while perhaps not one page contained the "Incipit," or the "Explicit feliciter liber I. de ——," so as to give a clue to what these fragments contained. Learning was then indeed necessary; for conjecture often gave the first intimation of what had been discovered, from the style, or from the sentence having been fortunately embalmed or petrified, by quotation in some later author.

In this way did Mai labour on, looking through the tangled mass of confused materials, catching up the ends of different threads, and pursuing them with patient diligence, till he had drawn each, broken or perfect as it happened to exist. After one minor publication of a translation, he began in 1813, and continued till 1819, to pour out an unintermitting stream of volumes, containing works or portions of works, lost as it was supposed irrecoverably. Various orations of Cicero; the lost writings of Julius Fronton; unpublished letters of Marcus Aurelius, Antoninus

Pius, Lucius Verus, and Appian; fragments of speeches by Aurelius Symmachus; the History of Dionysius of Halicarnassus from the 12th to the 20th book; inedited fragments of Philo; ancient commentaries on Virgil; two books of Eusebius's Chronicles; the Itineraries of Alexander, and of Constantius Augustus, son of the Emperor Constantine; three books of Julius Valerius on the actions of Alexander the Great; the 6th and 14th Sibylline books; finally, the celebrated Gothic version, by Ulphilas, of St. Paul and other parts of Scripture; such were the principal works recovered and published, with notes, prefaces, and translations, by this indefatigable scholar, in the period just mentioned of six years. It was a work in which he could have little or no assistance from others; in fact it was an art exclusively his own.

Mai's reputation was already European. At the early age of thirty-seven he had made more additions to our stock of ancient literature than a century had done before him. At this moment a vacancy occurred in the Vatican library, that of first librarian. Cardinals Consalvi and Litta, the Secretary of State and Head-Librarian, at once cast their eyes on the young priest at Milan, as the fittest person to occupy the post. On his arrival at Rome he lost no time in exploring

the wider and richer field offered to his cultivation. He came no longer to learn, but with a perfected tact, an experienced eye, and a decisive critical judgment. Hence he soon began his work of reproduction, and singularly enough in continuation of his previous successes. For he discovered in the Vatican, portions of the very Bobbio manuscripts which he had explored in the Ambrosian, containing consequently the wanting parts of authors already partially recovered. This was the case with Fronto and his imperial pupils and friends, one of the most charming epistolary collections ever published. By adding what was in Rome to what had been given at Milan, Mai was able to present a much more complete edition of it. He also published valuable fragments of civil law, anterior to the Justinian code, and of works on orthography by comparatively obscure authors.

But whatever he had till now performed was eclipsed by the most fortunate and brilliant of his discoveries, that of Cicero's long-coveted treatise "*De Republica*." Petrarca, Poggio, and Bessarion, with a host of elegant scholars, had desired and sought in vain to see this treatise. It had eluded every research. Under a copy of St. Augustine's Commentary on the Psalms Mai discovered it, in large bold characters, with its

title legible. I can well remember the commotion which the announcement of this success excited through the literary world in Rome. Of course it took some time to prepare the work for publication. Indeed I have heard from the learned discoverer himself, that while new types were being cast, and arrangements made for publishing it through all Europe, he was busily engaged in hunting out all the quotations of Cicero's work dispersed through the ponderous tomes of subsequent writers, especially Fathers. The very one whose own lucubrations had shielded it from destruction, and covered it with a patina or antiquarian crust such as often saves a valuable medal, yielded no small number of extracts, which either were found in the discovered portions and so verified their genuineness, or were absent from them and so filled up lacunæ.

How often have I had that precious volume in my hand, with the man whose fame it crowned explaining to friends around him the entire process of discovery, and the manner in which he drew out order from the chaotic confusion of its leaves. Indeed seldom was it my lot to lead any party to visit the Vatican library, while Monsignor Mai was librarian, without his leaving his own pursuit, to show us its treasures, and not the least valuable of them, himself.

It need not be said that further honours and promotions were lavished upon him. He was made Canon of St. Peter's, a burthen indeed, but a distinction also, and a prelate of the highest order. Gregory XVI., wishing to employ his extraordinary abilities in the service of religion, named him Secretary of the Congregation of Propaganda. This was in 1833; but, though this office took him away from his dear manuscripts and gave him occupation enough for any other man, it did not interrupt his studies. He was allowed to have the codices at his house, and went on transcribing and printing as much as before. At length on the 12th of February, 1838, Pope Gregory named him Cardinal, together with his illustrious friend, and successor in the librarianship, Mezzofanti.

Even now, he was appointed to offices that required great attention and assiduity: still there was no intermission in his favourite pursuits. He did not confine his industry to palimpsests; but drew from the shelves of the Vatican, histories, poems, medical and mathematical treatises, acts of councils, biblical commentaries, in fine, works of every age and of every class, classical, patristic, medieval, and even modern, not only in Greek and Latin, but in Arabic,

Syro-Chaldaic, and Armenian. He reestablished, under the auspices of Gregory, the celebrated Vatican press, which had formerly published the splendid St. Ephrem; he had cast for it new sets of types, for various alphabets, from the best models in old manuscripts; and especially employed it in the printing of the great Codex Vaticanus, which he transcribed.

The fruit of this unceasing industry may be summarily described as follows:—

1. “*Scriptorum veterum nova collectio.*” A collection, in ten huge quarto volumes, of writers sacred and profane, of every age.

2. “*Classici scriptores ex codicibus Vaticanis editi;*” in ten volumes of smaller dimensions. These two series closely followed one another. The first began to be published in 1827, and the second was closed in 1838.

England was not behind other countries in honouring the genius and indefatigable application of this great man. The Royal Society of Literature awarded to him its gold medal in 1824, with this inscription on the reverse:—**ANGELO MAIO PALIMPSESTORUM INVENTORI ET RESTAURATORI.** Literary distinctions showered on him from every side, and his bust was erected in the halls of learned societies. His labours, however, did not

end here. Finding abundant materials yet remaining at hand, worthy of publication, he undertook and completed :


3. "Spicilegium Romanum," another series in ten volumes, which he finished in 1844.

In 1853, on the death of Cardinal Lambruschini, he was named Cardinal-Librarian, though it can hardly be said that this appointment changed his habits, or increased his advantages. Still he continued his work, and commenced the publication of a new series of twelve volumes.

4. "Nova Patrum Bibliotheca." Only six volumes had appeared, when death brought his labours prematurely to a close.

This took place on the 8th of September, 1854, after a short inflammatory attack, which lasted thirty-five hours, at Albano, whither he had retired for change of air. His end was calm, resigned, and most devout.

The mere catalogue of the authors, some of whose works he for the first time published, would fill several pages; but it may be worth mentioning, that, besides the many classical authors whom he thus illustrated, there is not a single century of the Christian era, from the second to the seventeenth, from which he has not produced important, and previously unknown works. He assured me that he had transcribed



all with his own hand ; translated, if Greek ; and added notes and prefaces, (generally full of learning,) entirely by himself. This, however, was at an earlier period, for in the preface to the second volume of his last work, he mentions the Abbate Matranga as his assistant. He had also the aid of learned Orientals for Eastern manuscripts.

His transcript of the celebrated manuscript of the entire Greek Scripture was printed many years before his death. Why it was not published, nobody but himself seemed to know. A couple of years before his decease, he asked me if I thought any publisher would take the whole impression off his hands, and dispose of it on his own account. Now, however, it may be judged to have been for the best that publication was delayed : for in a copy of such a manuscript the most rigorous exactness is the first requisite. Not only a word, but a letter, a sign, a jot or tittle that deviates from it, impairs its value as a representative of a referee in doubtful or difficult passages. Interminable disputes might arise on a reading as presented by the original, on the faith of its copy ; and if final appeal is made to the manuscript, and it is found to have been unfaithfully transcribed in 'one place,' all trust is at an end. Now, that in copying so huge and inconvenient a book some slight errors



should have been committed, especially when it is done by a person distracted by numerous other undertakings, is only in conformity with a trite axiom, about the most natural proneness of humanity.

The work has therefore been minutely collated with the original, by a commission of able scholars; and a list, extending to fourteen pages, has been made of mistakes. With this accurate correction, the work is offered for immediate publication.

The will of this no less estimable than learned man was in his own hand, and was remarkable for the kindness of its provisions. All his household were secured their full pay for life if they had been ten years in his service, half-pay if they had been six. A large sum, besides, was to be divided among them. For the very poor of his native village he provided an endowment of 12,000 dollars, besides leaving them his residuary legatees. To its parish church he bequeathed all his ecclesiastical plate and furniture.

His library, which he describes as large and precious, he says he would have gladly left for the general use of the Roman clergy. But he had not means to provide premises in which to preserve it, or a proper endowment to increase,

or sufficient officers to guard it. He therefore desires it to be valued, and sold; yet so that, should the Papal Government be disposed to purchase it, the price should only be half the valuation. Even, however, should this be the case, he makes it a condition that his collection be kept apart and bear his name; or at least, that each book should keep his arms already placed within it. His MSS. he left absolutely to the Vatican. It need not be added, that the Pope immediately gave orders for the purchase of the library; which has been placed in an apartment by itself, in the great library over which Mai had shed such additional lustre.<sup>1</sup> There Pius IX. went to visit it in the carnival of 1856.

<sup>1</sup> In the Address read by the President of the R.S.L. in 1855 (p. 20), it was stated that, "owing to the scanty finances, or the *stinginess*, of the Pontifical Government," the library had been sold. This was corrected as an "erratum" in the Annual Report for 1856, p. 10; but no excuse was made for the use of so offensive a word, wrongly applied. The Holy See, or Papal Government, may be, or may have been, too poor to carry out all its wishes. It may have been economical, but has never deserved to be taunted as *stingy*. Pius VII. bought Cardinal Zelada's magnificent library for the Vatican; Leo XII. Cicognara's rare collection, and greatly increased the unique series of papyri formed by Pius VI.; Gregory XVI. added ten rooms, and gave a most valuable cabinet of early Christian paintings, besides founding three new museums. Surely, even if Pius IX., who has done so much, had been unable to purchase the Mai library, such a term ought not to have been applied to his Government. Yet England may refuse to purchase the Soulage collection without such reproofs being administered!

A little anecdote is connected with this portion of his will. A few days before his death, while apparently in full possession of his ordinary health, he stopped his carriage at the door of a well-known bookseller, whom he much employed in his book transactions, and asked him if there was any news in his line of business. The tradesman, with surprise, replied that till the winter nothing would be going on. "Then," said the Cardinal, "you will soon have an extensive job to do." "What?" it was naturally asked. "My dear B——," replied Mai, with tears in his eyes, and pressing the hand of his attached client, "you will soon have to value my library. Farewell!" This circumstance, and his having left, for the first time, the key of his private cabinet, in which were his secret papers, with his executor, Cardinal Altieri, naturally led all to suppose that premonitory symptoms, unseen by others, forewarned him of his approaching dissolution.

His marble monument, commenced in his lifetime, is a beautiful specimen of what artists know by the name of the cinquecento style. It is composed of a base from which rise two Corinthian pilasters, flanking a deep niche, and supporting an arch. In the niche is a rich sarcophagus, on which reposes the effigy of the

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Cardinal, offering up his works towards which he points, to the Incarnate Wisdom, who is represented in relief on the upper portion of the recess. On each of its walls are medallions representing Mai's nomination to the Ambrosian and Vatican libraries. Above them and below are angels holding scrolls, on which are written, in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and old Syriac, the text of 1 Esdras, vii. 6. "He was a ready scribe in the law." The Holy Spirit, and the four Doctors of the Latin Church in relief, occupy the inside of the arch ; above which, outside, rises the architectural cornice, then a semicircular lunette bearing the Cardinal's arms, and towering above all the triumphant cross.

Among Mai's papers was found his sepulchral inscription, in his own hand. It has been engraven on the base of this monument, now erecting in his titular church of St. Anastasia. Benzoni, one of the most distinguished artists of Rome, is the sculptor chosen by Mai himself for the work. The following is the epitaph carved upon it:—

" Qui doctis vigilans studiis mea tempora trivi,  
 Bergomatum soboles, Angelus, hic jaceo.  
 Purpureum mihi syrma dedit rubrumque galerum  
 Roma, sed empyreum das mihi, CHRISTE, polum.  
 Te expectans, longos potui tolerare labores ;  
 Nunc mihi sit tecum dulcis et alta quies !"

with some that misinterpretation of his character. A most noble forehead, equal to containing, piled up but orderly within, any amount of knowledge, caught the eye of the visitor to a Papal function, and generally inspired the desire to know whose countenance it distinguished. Then came eyes deeply burrowing under brows knitted somewhat by the effort which a short-sighted person makes to see, till he has rendered habitual the expression of that strain. His features were dignified, modelled on a firm intellectual type. And undoubtedly his conversation was serious; to a beholder severe, but not to a listener. One naturally spoke with him on grave subjects, loved to learn from his conversation, listened with respect, with reverence rather, and felt in the presence of a virtuous and a wise man, with whom it would be a pride one day to have been familiar. But there was not a particle of superciliousness, or overbearing, or sarcastic manners about him, none of the oppressiveness of genius, or the ponderousness of rare learning. Yet both were discernible in everything he said and wrote, the learning and the genius. His manner was calm and earnest, but unimpassioned; persuasive and eloquent, without clamour. His published discourses are specimens of beautiful diction and noble thoughts.

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that could be snatched from these duties, which were always thoroughly discharged, was seized for his favourite pursuits; and I should doubt if, during the few moments that a secretary might take in going to the next room for a paper, and returning with it, a line was not copied or translated from the open manuscript on the table. He rarely went into society, except for a few minutes, where courteous duty imperatively demanded it. A solitary drive, which I have sometimes counted it an honour to deprive of that epithet, perhaps a short walk, was almost all the robbery that he permitted recreation to make from his domestic converse at home, with that chaste wisdom that had early captivated his heart. Soon after dusk, his servants were dismissed, his outer door was inexorably bolted, and alone with his codices he was lavish of his midnight oil, protracting his studies to an unknown hour.

This retirement and uncongeniality with society obtained for him, with those who did not know him, a character of moroseness or haughtiness, which disappeared the moment you approached him. He was most affable, kind, and ready to assist by counsel or suggestion; and, however interrupted in his own work, he never betrayed impatience or a desire to get rid of the visit. His countenance, perhaps, encouraged

recommended experienced a rebuff. Like most persons, who, working hard themselves, exact full labour from those subject to them, Mai had his murmurers in the Library itself; but time has fully justified his exaction of vigilance and industry from them.

Perhaps we may not ill characterise him and his pursuits, by an amalgamation and adaptation of two eulogies by an old poet:—

*Angele Mai, "studiose, memor, celer, ignoratis  
Assidue in libris, nec nisi operta legens;  
Exesas tineis opicasque evolvere chartas  
Major quam promptis cura tibi in studiis.  
Aurea mens, vox suada tibi, tum sermo quietus:  
Nec cunctator eras, nec properante sono.  
Pulchra senecta, nitens habitus, procul ira dolusque,  
Et placidæ vitæ congrua meta tibi."*<sup>1</sup>

Well might Niebuhr say of him, that he was "a man divinely granted to our age, to whom no one citizen or stranger,—to use the words of Ennius,—will be able to repay the fruit of his labours."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Again will the courteous reader accept a poor translation?—

"Mai, studious, unforgetting, quick, intent  
On books long lost,—to trace their covered lines;  
Parchments, worm-gnawed, thy care,—time-soiled and rent,  
Beyond what lore on modern pages shines;  
Sterling thy mind; winning thy tongue, and sweet;  
Rapid nor slow thy speech. Fair looked old age  
In thy sheen robes, free from all craft or heat:  
Meet for thy placid course, its closing stage."

AUSONIUS, *Prof. de Victorio et Staphylis.*

In vitâ Agathisæ.

## CHAPTER VI.

## CHARACTER OF GREGORY THE SIXTEENTH.

THERE is yet living at least one English nobleman, celebrated for his love of art, who saw Pius VII. when elected Pope at Venice in 1800. It may be doubted if there be a second person in the United Kingdom whose recollection of Pontiffs reaches so far back. There are hundreds, however, if not thousands, who remember Gregory XVI., who have been presented to him, and who consequently retain distinct impressions of his looks, his address, and his conversation. Scarcely an Englishman, whose travels were performed during his long Pontificate, left Rome without this honour and gratification. Upon such points, therefore, as merely meet the eye, recollections of him may be said to be spread over the whole country, and, indeed, to exist in one generation or other of every travelled family.

The remarks one heard from such outside observers were, that at first sight his features did



not seem cast in so noble a mould as those of his predecessors; they were large and rounded, and wanted those finer touches which suggest ideas of higher genius or delicate taste. But this judgment ceased the moment you came into closer contact and conversation with him. He did not discourse freely in any languages but Italian and Latin; and, therefore, persons who had to communicate with him through an interpreter, such, for example, as the late Baron Kestner, and to have each sentence twice repeated, could form a very imperfect opinion of his conversational powers. But those who could speak Italian freely, and approached him merely to receive his blessing, soon found him launch into familiar conversation, which drew them on almost into forgetfulness of his twofold dignity. His countenance then, and still more when discoursing on graver topics, lighted up, and was mantled with a glowing expression; his eyes became bright and animated, and his intelligence and learning gave themselves utterance through his flowing and graceful language. I remember an English man of letters who got upon the subject of poetry in his audience, and came away much struck by the Pope's judicious observations, as well as extensive and familiar acquaintance with his theme.

In health he was robust, and his powers of exertion, physical and mental, were very great. He could tire most of his attendants in his daily walks. His favourite one was beyond Pontemolle along the old Flaminian Way to Torre di Quinta, a considerable distance; and he enjoyed seeing much younger men glad to remount their horses or their carriages to return home. His health was, indeed, so hale and sound, on his accession, that he declined naming any physician or surgeon for his own person, but ordered the salaries of those offices, and others which he similarly kept in abeyance, to be invested, towards forming a superannuation fund for the servants and officers of the palace. This he nursed and increased till it became of considerable amount. After a few years, however, a cancerous affection attacked his face; and in 1835, by advice of the Prussian minister, he sent for an able physician, Dr. Alertz of Aix-la-Chapelle, whom I happened to travel with on board a steamer, in company with Dr. Reumont, for many years attached to the Prussian embassy at Florence, and well known in art-literature for his able writings on Andrea del Sarto. The young German, acting with the Italian physician to the palace, arrested the progress of the disease, so that it does not seem to have acted

on Gregory's constitution or shortened the fullness of his days.

This strength of frame and soundness of organs enabled the Pope, throughout his reign, to attend to business, temporal and ecclesiastical, with unwearied assiduity and unvarying cheerfulness. The severer habits of his claustral life had inured him to the regularity and even monotony of the Papal, its early hours, its seclusion from social enjoyment, its silent meals, its many solitary hours, and their unrelaxed occupation. He commenced his morning so truly matutinally that he dispensed with the attendance of a chaplain at his own Mass, saying that it was unreasonable to expect other persons to accommodate themselves to his unseasonable hours. His own servant alone assisted him. A peculiar simplicity of habits was remarkable in him. When Cardinal-Prefect of Propaganda I often noticed this; and how he would do himself what ordinarily a servant might have been called in to perform. Hence, while he provided richly for the splendour of divine worship, and replaced some of its plundered ornaments, he would wear nothing costly himself.<sup>1</sup>

His vigorous mind, as has been observed,

<sup>1</sup> Such as shoes richly embroidered, in accordance with the practice of the Pope's wearing the cross upon his.

seemed to shrink from no amount of application to business of every class. It was no idle life, indeed, that he led. In the management of ecclesiastical affairs business is divided among congregations, or boards as we should call them, but the ultimate result, in every important case, depends on the Papal approbation. It was not uncommon for Gregory to hesitate in giving his assent, and to have the papers in the cause brought to himself, and finally come to a different decision from that of the congregation. Cardinal Acton used to say that he had known as many as eight or ten cases in which the Pope had refused to ratify the judgment of a congregation, and had at length reversed it, upon canonical grounds which had been overlooked by the many learned persons previously engaged in its discussion. And this instinctive perception occurred in cases affecting distant countries. One instance related to Canada. A distinguished bishop of that country found that the Pope demurred to a resolution passed by the Propaganda about it; and in a few days, as he declared, fresh information arrived which fully justified the correctness of the sovereign judgment. A similar instance referred to Germany.

I remember that on one occasion, admitted on a day of privacy, I found him writing, him-

self, a long Latin letter to a bishop in Germany, which he most condescendingly read to me ; and masterly it was in sentiment and expression. It produced, indeed, its intended effect, though involving one of the rarest exercises of Pontifical authority. In like manner he wrote, himself, an answer of several sheets, sending his own autograph copy, to one of the bishops in England, on a matter which related to an ecclesiastical affair of this country.

In the beginning of his reign long edicts were published on the turbulence and disorder of the times, full of touching appeals and generous sentiments, which, I believe, were considered as the productions of his own pen. In cases of life and death, the silence of the Pope, on the report of the trial being submitted to him by the chief judge, is equivalent to a ratification of the sentence, which then takes its course. But Gregory always desired the entire pleadings and depositions to be brought to him, and went carefully through them himself: and if he made no observation in returning the papers, it was understood that he tacitly approved the fatal sentence. Oftener, however, he leaned to the side of mercy ; and executions were rare, and only for atrocious crimes. I am not aware that there was a single political execution in his Pontificate.

In the discharge of his high duties he respected not the person of man, and cared nothing for the pride or strength of those whom he had to encounter. To one great contest which he sustained, allusion has been made under the last Pontificate, without intention of taking up the thread of its narrative in this. It may be sufficient to say that in its last phase, the imprisonment of the Archbishop of Cologne, he fully sustained his character for unflinching support of the cause committed to the protection of his sublime office. Indeed, scarcely a year of his Pontificate passed by, without his having to pronounce an allocution on the oppression of the Church in some country or other, north or south of Europe, east or west of the world. He spoke the truth plainly and publicly; and generally reaped the fruit of his straightforwardness and courage.

The most painful of his conflicts, however, was one face to face with the greatest of Europe's sovereigns, a man accustomed to command without contradiction, and to be surrounded by complete submission. He did not imagine that there was a human being who would presume to read him a lesson, or still less to administer him a rebuke. It may be proper to premise that the present Emperor of Russia,

while Czarowich, visited Rome, and was received with the utmost respect by all ranks, and with extreme kindness by the Pope. The young prince expressed himself highly gratified by his reception; and I was told by those to whom he had declared it, that he had procured a portrait of Gregory, which he said he should always keep, as that of a friend deeply venerated and esteemed. Further, in 1842, the Emperor, his father, had sent very splendid presents to the Pope, a vase of malachite, now in the Vatican library, and a large supply of the same precious material for the Basilica of St. Paul. Still he had not ceased to deal harshly, not to say cruelly, with his Catholic subjects, especially the Poles. They were driven into the Greek communion by putting it out of their power to follow their own worship; they were deprived of their own bishops and priests, and even persecuted by more violent inflictions and personal sufferings. On this subject the Holy See had both publicly and privately complained; but no redress, and but little, if any, alleviation, had been obtained. At length, in December, 1845, the Emperor Nicholas I. came himself to Rome. It was observed, both in Italy and, I believe, in England, how minute and unrelaxed were the precautions taken to secure him against any

danger of conspiracy : how his apartment, bed, food, body-guard, were arranged with a watchful eye to the prevention of any surprise from hidden enemies. Be this as it may, nothing amiss befell him, unless it was his momentous interview with the Head of that Church which he had mercilessly persecuted, with him whose rival he considered himself, as real autocratic Head of a large proportion of what he called the "Orthodox Church," and as recognised protector of its entire communion. It was arranged that the Emperor should be attended by M. de Bouténeff, his Minister at Rome, and that the Pope should have a Cardinal at his side. He selected, as has been said, the English Cardinal Acton. This was not a usual provision for a royal visit, but gave it rather the air of a conference ; and so in truth it was. The Pope felt he had a solemn and trying duty to perform. Could he allow the persecutor of his flock to approach him, and depart without a word of expostulation and even of reproof? Could he receive him with a bland smile and insincere accolade ; speak to him of the unmeaning topics of the hour, or of the cold politics of the world? Impossible! It would have been at variance, not with personal disposition, but with the spiritual character which he held of



Father of the Faithful, Defender of the weak; Shepherd of the ravened flock; Protector of the persecuted; Representative of fearless, uncompromising, martyred Pontiffs; Vicar of Him who feared no stalking, any more than prowling, wolf. It would have been to his conscience a gnawing and undying reproach, if he had lost the opportunity of saying face to face what he had written and spoken of one absent, or if he had not employed his privilege as a sovereign to second his mission as a Pontiff. He would have confirmed by his cowardice or his forbearance, though it might have been called courtly refinement or gentleness of character, all the self-confidence and fearlessness of a fanatical persecutor, placed above all but some great moral control.

Certainly much hung in the balance of that Pontiff's deliberation, how he should act. That meekest of men, Pius VII., had not neglected the opportunity of his captivity, to enumerate, with fervid gentleness, to his powerful master, the evils which the Church had suffered at his hands. Gregory never undertook any grave work without much prayer; and one so momentous as this was not assuredly determined on, except after long and earnest supplication. What were the Emperor's intentions, what his ideas, what his desires in coming to Rome, and having necessa-

rily a personal meeting with the Pope, it is impossible to conjecture. Did he hope to overcome him by his splendid presence, truly majestic, soldier-like, and imperial? Or to cajole and win him by soothing speeches and insincere promises? Or to gain the interpretative approval of silence and forbearance? One must conjecture in vain. Certain it is, that he came, he saw, and conquered not. It has been already mentioned, that the subject and particulars of the conference were never revealed by its only witness at Rome. The Pope's own account was brief, simple, and full of conscious power. "I said to him all that the Holy Ghost dictated to me."

And that he had not spoken vainly, with words that had beaten the air, but that their strokes had been well placed and driven home, there was evidence otherwise recorded. An English gentleman was in some part of the palace through which the Imperial visitor passed as he returned from his interview, and described his altered appearance. He had entered with his usual firm and royal aspect, grand as it was from statue-like features, stately frame, and martial bearing; free and at his ease, with gracious looks and condescending gestures of salutation. So he passed through the long suite of ante-rooms, the Imperial eagle, glossy, fiery, "with plumes

unruffled, and with eye unquenched," in all the glory of pinions which no flight had ever wearied, of beak and talon which no prey had yet resisted. He came forth again, with head uncovered, and hair, if it can be said of man, dishevelled ; haggard and pale, looking as though in an hour he had passed through the condensation of a protracted fever ; taking long strides, with stooping shoulders, unobservant, unsaluting : he waited not for his carriage to come to the foot of the stairs, but rushed out into the outer court, and hurried away from apparently the scene of a discomfiture. It was the eagle dragged from his eyrie among the clefts of the rocks, "from his nest among the stars," his feathers crumpled, and his eye quelled<sup>1</sup>, by a power till then despised.

But let us be fully just. The interview did not excite rancorous or revengeful feelings. No doubt the Pontiff's words were in the spirit of those on the High Priest's breast-plate — "doctrine and truth," sound in principle and true in fact. They convinced and persuaded. Facts with their proofs had, no doubt, been carefully prepared, and could not be gainsayed. The strong emotion which Gregory on other occasions easily betrayed could not have been restrained here. Often in prayer has every beholder seen

<sup>1</sup> Abdias (Obadiab), i. 8, 9.

the tears running down his glowing countenance; often those who have approached him with a tale of distress, or stood by when news of a crime has been communicated to him, have seen his features quiver, and his eye dim with the double sorrow of the Apostle, the tear of weakness with the weak, the scalding drop of indignation for sin.<sup>1</sup> This sensibility cannot have been stemmed, even by the coldness of an interpreted discourse, but must have accompanied that flow of eloquent words to which, when earnest, Gregory gave utterance.

All this must have told effectually, where there could be nothing to reply. Mistaken zeal, early prejudice, and an extravagance of national feelings had no doubt influenced the conduct of the Czar towards his Catholic subjects, against the better impulses of his own nature, which Russians always considered just, generous, and even parental. No one had before possessed the opportunity, or the courage, to appeal to the inward tribunal of this better sense. When well made such a call could hardly fail.

“ *Prima est hæc ultio, quod se  
Judice nemo nocens absolvitur, improba quamvis  
Gratia fallaci prætoris vicerit urna.* ” JUVENAL.

From that interview the Catholics of Russia may

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 29.

to 1846, presented sufficient opportunities for exercising that charity which the right hand cannot conceal from the left. Thus from October 26th, 1831, to the beginning of 1832, successive shocks of earthquakes destroyed many houses and villages in Umbria, and shook almost to pieces cities with their sumptuous buildings. I remember travelling through the province not long after, and witnessing their frightful effects. Some villages through which the road passed — and many more among the hills — were utterly destroyed, though providentially the loss of life was not in proportion to material demolition. Foligno was so shattered, that, excepting the solid cathedral and a few other public buildings, there was not an edifice but what was shored up; and in fact the main street was traversed, through its whole length, by beams, which made the out-thrust and bulging walls on either side give mutual support. And now the traveller will see wall-plates all along, to which interior iron tie-rods are attached binding every house within. But the most signal and afflicting overthrow was that of the noble sanctuary of Sta. Maria degli Angioli, the dome of which, towering in the plain or valley of Perugia just below Asisi, was a beautiful object. This dome covered the celebrated Portiuncula, or Chapel of

St. Francis, the small rural oratory in which he began the work of his stupendous Institute. The entire nave fell in, leaving the cupola marvellously suspended over the little sanctuary, not a brick of which was displaced.<sup>1</sup>

Subscriptions for the many sufferers by this calamity were immediately opened, with the Pope at their head. As to the church, although he and many others contributed largely, the great merit of patient and persevering almsgathering belongs to a simple Franciscan lay-brother of the house which served the church, Br. Luigi Ferri, of Bologna; who went from country to country begging contributions, in place of which he often received, and patiently endured, rebuffs, and insults, and occasionally the impostor's meed in prisons and police-courts. He collected 16,000 dollars. The church was completely restored, and solemnly reopened in forty months.

Again, when the cholera appeared in Ancona, a city which had shown itself particularly hos-

<sup>1</sup> On being cleaned, one end of this chapel was found to have been painted in fresco by Pietro Perugino, and cut down, so as to mutilate the picture. Overbeck has executed a most lovely painting on the other end, representing a heavenly vision showering flowers on St. Francis in prayer. It is well known by its engraving. He lived for some years in the convent attached, while he finished his work, like one of its members, refusing all other remuneration. See "Dublin Review," vol. i. p. 458. He had begun his work in 1830.

tile to him, Gregory sent, from his own resources, considerable relief.

His more private charities are known to have been profuse : but there was one form, though a more spiritual one, which was peculiarly exhibited. On one occasion a Spanish lady, perplexed in conscience, desired to unburthen its anxieties to him as chief pastor ; and Gregory descended into the confessional for her, to discharge the functions of a simple priest. And a German lady of great information and ability, the Baroness K——, informed me, how being still a Lutheran, but drawn singularly towards the Catholic Church, she asked for an opportunity of placing her difficulties for solution before the Sovereign Pontiff, as its highest authority : and it was instantly granted. He received her in his garden ; and, ordering his attendants to remain in one place, walked up and down with her in their presence till he had solved her doubts, and given her his blessing. She was afterwards one of the most zealous co-operators with the Princess Borghese, in supporting the cholera orphans.

And now to come nearer home, he ever showed more than kindness towards those who represented our country in Rome. Having been Prefect of Propaganda for so many years he had

become minutely acquainted with every part of the British dominions, both at home and abroad, with its bishops, its wants, its actual condition and future prospects. A singular instance of his sagacity in this knowledge may be quoted. Not only did he increase, as has been said, the number of Apostolic Vicariates in England, but spontaneously, without being led to it, he told the writer that the hierarchy would have to be established here, upon the removal of one obstacle, which he specially described, and emphatically characterised, and which it was not in his own power to deal with. When that should occur, he distinctly remarked, this form of church government must be introduced into England. In the course of a few years, but after his death, the event to which he had pointed took place, with consequent circumstances which ordinarily he could not have foreseen; and his successor, unapprised of that forethought, almost at once executed what Gregory had intended under similar conditions.

The Irish College had special motives of gratitude to this Pontiff. The late venerable Bishop of Dromore, then the Rev. Dr. Michael Blake, Parish priest in Dublin, came to restore this establishment, first suppressed under the French occupation, and then incorporated with the Col-



lege of Propaganda. The old building on the Quirinal Hill was considered unsuitable, or probably was unavailable for the purpose, and Pope Leo XII. by his Brief "*Plura inter collegia*," of February 14th, 1826, assigned for the new college a small house, formerly the Umbrian College, situated in the street *Delle botteghe oscure*, with a very small church annexed. Dr. Blake governed the college till he resigned it into the hands of the Rev. Dr. Boylan, who in his turn was succeeded by the present Archbishop Cullen. Dr. Blake was created Bishop of Dromore in 1833; and I rejoice to see him yet vigorously discharging the duties of his office.

The following history of his own early career, given by one intimately connected with this admirable house, can hardly fail to edify my readers. When a student at Rome, he was remarkably slow and considered dull. This was owing, perhaps entirely, to considerable indistinctness in his speech, accompanied by hesitation. On one occasion, venturing to interpose his opinion in some discussion among his comrades, one of them rudely interrupted him by saying: "What business have you to speak, who are the dunce of the college?" The wound was smarting but salutary. The meek boy did not reply, but

retired heart-sore into solitude. He reflected on what had been said publicly to him, without rebuke from any one, with silent concurrence of all. Yes, that was his character among them, that the opinion even of the kindest of his friends. If they had not told him of it, one had let it out to him. To this rough monitor he ought to be thankful, for telling him the truth. And now what was to be done? The reproach must be wiped away, the character reversed. Its causes, real or imaginary, must be cured at any cost. This must be the unremitting task of his school-life; he must never forget it.

He took immediate steps for this purpose. He accordingly wrote on a slip of paper "The Dunce of the College," in plain unmistakable letters, and placed it on his desk, where, unseen by others, it should ever be before his eyes. During the regular hours of application there it was; at times of extra study, while others were at recreation, this stinging goad was at his side. He adopted a slow deliberate utterance, which accompanied him through life, but which perfectly remedied his original defect. He soon rose honourably both in his class, and in the estimation of his school-fellows—those severest but most accurate of judges—who, however, knew not of the spell which formed the secret of his success.

And so he passed through all the honoured degrees of his sacred profession, to its highest attainable dignity. Often have I found this anecdote useful to encourage a down-hearted student: though, of course, I have concealed the name.

In the year 1836 Gregory XVI. bestowed on the Irish College a much more spacious house, with a considerable garden. But what forms its chief prize is the church attached to it, being the old basilica of St. Agatha in Suburra, which St. Gregory the Great himself tells us in his Dialogues, he cleansed from the taint of Arianism, amidst peculiar and portentous occurrences. It is the diaconal church of Cardinal Antonelli, who has been liberal in repairing and greatly embellishing it.

As to the English College, Gregory XVI. never failed to show it the greatest kindness. Twice he visited it, once while I presided over it, under the following circumstances. By acts of perfectly unsolicited goodness, he had twice placed me in his household as one of his chamberlains, first honorary, and then in full degree. In neither instance was the act of grace heard of till accomplished, nor in either was any fee permitted to be paid. This office, to which no emoluments are attached, gave a place in

all public functions, the most favourable, perhaps, for witnessing them. On the 2nd of February, 1837, the anniversary of the Pope's election, I was proceeding to take my place in the Sistine Chapel, when a voice whispered in my ear, that next day, early, His Holiness intended visiting our house. It was one of his more immediate attendants, who, not wishing us to be taken by surprise, gave the timely warning, otherwise we should have received notice in the evening, without time to make suitable preparations. Accordingly everything was got ready in time. The College, which is a noble edifice, has a suite of large halls, well fitted for even a Papal reception. The first had just been adorned with what was till then unseen in Rome, a collection of large maps hung on rollers, brought from England, the second contained a number of valuable paintings, the third was the library. In the first a throne was erected, on which the Pope received the inmates of the house, and a few friends brought hastily together. One good thing on such occasions is, that there is no address to be presented, and no formal answer to be given ; no tax, in other words, on the resources of commonplace, and no study to say as much as possible on the one side and as little as possible on the other. An easy familiarity

and freedom marks all such intercourse between sovereign and subjects. The innocent repartee, the pleasant anecdote, still more the cheery laugh, are not prohibited nor withheld. The function of the throne, therefore, was soon over, and Gregory, seated in the library, was in a short time talking in his usual good-natured strain with all around him. Somehow or other he had received notice of many other importations from England, made by me in a visit to this country in 1836; and he expressed his intention of seeing them all. So he visited every part of the house, enjoying with evident glee many things of outlandish use, none more than the beer-machine adapted to the purposes of uplifting the produce of the vine, instead of that of the bine. And scarcely less an object of amusement was a gigantic medicine-chest, which the master-craftsman in such wares, in London, declared to have been the largest and completest he had ever manufactured, the next having been one for the Emperor of Morocco. The bottles containing the inscrutable compounds of the London pharmacopœia, with their inviting golden labels, the bright finish of every part, the neatness of fit, and the accuracy of packing, almost overcame that involuntary shudder and creeping of the flesh, with which an ordinary

mind contemplates a large collection of what in that state, and by those in health, is invariably called physic. It becomes medicine in a small phial by the bedside.

So passed pleasantly the morning hours, in a loitering cheerful visit, without etiquette or formalities, till the door was reached and a kind farewell was given, and the royal carriages dashed away towards some other place selected for another of these carnival visits. Of course, the event of that day was not allowed to fade from memory; but was, as usual, commemorated and perpetuated by an inscription, as follows:—

GREGORIO . XVI. PONT. MAX.  
CATHOLICÆ . RELIGIONIS . PROPAGATORI  
QVOD . III. NONAS . FEBRVARIAS . AN. M.D.CCC.XXXVII.  
COLLEGIVM . ANGLORVM . INVISENS  
ALVMNOSQVE . ADLOQVIO . ET . OMNI . BENIGNITATE . SOLATVS  
STVDIOSISSIMAM . ANIMI . VOLUNTATEM  
IN . CATHOLICOS . ANGLOS . VNIVERSOS  
PVBLICO . HOC . TESTIMONIO . DECLARAVIT.  
NICOLAVS . WISEMAN . COLLEGII . RECTOR  
IIDEMQUE . ALVMNI  
AD . MEMORIAM . AVSPICATISSIMI . DIEI  
IN . ANGLORVM . CATHOLICORVM . ANIMIS . ALTE . DEFIXAM  
POSTERITATI . COMMENDANDAM  
THOMA . WELD. PRESB. CARD. PATRONO . SUFFRAGANTE  
DEVOTI . SANCTITATI . MAJESTATIQUE . EJVS.

Another marble slab records a second visit to the College in 1843; but that is beyond the boundaries of personal recollection.

And now we come to our closing pages, the more difficult in proportion as they are the more agreeable to the writer. For they must be filled up with the more personal impressions of this Pontiff's character, distinct from merely official reminiscences. It must be by general observations only that this can be done. Let me then repeat that acquaintance with this Pope commenced, as it had done with no other before him, while he occupied a subordinate position ; and nobody thought of him as a future sovereign. As Prefect of Propaganda I had frequently to see him on business, and found him most simple in his habits and kind in his intercourse. The clearness of his views, and quickness of his perception, made it both easy and agreeable to transact business with him. His confidence once gained upon such subjects as belonged more particularly to one's own sphere, was easily extended to other matters. I could give several instances of this facility ; and it was extended to the time of his Pontificate. Not only was an audience easily obtained on ordinary days, and at usual hours, but it was graciously granted almost at any time, when the ante-chamber was closed, and on days otherwise reserved for private occupation. Indeed it was not uncommon to receive a summons on

such days, with an order to proceed at once to the palace in ordinary dress. Once I well remember how this familiar kindness served me in great stead. I was engaged in delivering a course of Lectures, already alluded to, in the apartments of Cardinal Weld, in 1835. They were attended by very large and highly cultivated audiences. On one of the days of delivery I had been prevented from writing the Lecture in time, and was labouring to make up for my delay, but in vain. Quarter after quarter of each hour flew rapidly on, and my advance bore no proportion to the matter before me. The fatal hour of twelve was fast approaching, and I knew not what excuse I could make, nor how to supply, except by a lame recital, the important portion yet unwritten of my task,—for an index to the Lectures had been printed and circulated. Just as the last moment arrived, a carriage from the palace drove to the door, with a message that I would step into it at once, as His Holiness wished to speak to me. This was indeed a “*Deus ex machina* ;” the only and least thought of expedient that could have saved me from my embarrassment. A messenger was despatched to inform the gathering audience of the unexpected cause of necessary adjournment of our sitting till the next day. The object of



my summons was one of very trifling importance; and Gregory little knew what a service he had unintentionally rendered me. "Sic me servavit Apollo."

But here I must pause. The reception on all such occasions was cordial and most paternal. An embrace would supply the place of ceremonious forms on entrance: at one time a long familiar conversation, seated side by side; at another a visit to the penetralia of the Pontifical apartment, a small suite of entresols communicating by an internal staircase, occupied the time. There Gregory had his most choice collection of books, from every part of the world, beautifully bound, and he would ask about English works in it; and many other exquisite gems of art, miniatures and copies, as well as original paintings. What it has been my happiness to hear from him in such visits it would be betraying a sacred trust to reveal. But many and many words then spoken rise to the mind in times of trouble, like stars not only bright in themselves, but all the brighter in their reflection from the darkness of their mirror. They have been words of mastery and spell over after events, promises and prognostics which have not failed, assurances and supports that have never come to nought. Innumerable favours

and gracious acts, so many unexpected and unmerited manifestations of goodness, so continued a freedom, or rather familiarity, of communication as I have enjoyed from the condescending kindness of this Pontiff, leave his memory impressed on mine as that of a father rather than a sovereign. Encouragement the most unrestrained and warm-hearted in my pursuits, literary or ecclesiastical, however valueless in themselves; proofs of reliance on my fidelity at least, in affairs of greater moment than mine could ever be; such other marks of favourable sentiments as have been described, even though they necessarily led to a separation from him, painful at least to me: all these conspire to make me remember Gregory with a feeling distinct from that associated in my mind with any of his predecessors; not with deeper veneration than I entertain for Pius VII.; not with warmer gratitude than for Leo XII.; not with sincerer respect than for Pius VIII.; but with a feeling more akin to affection, such as does not often pass the narrow circle that bounds domestic relations. Another sentiment of devotedness and attachment still remains, reserved for one whose eulogium cannot enter, and sincerely I pray in me may never come, into the compass of only a past recollection.

Even the close of Gregory's Pontificate, his last years and edifying end, belong not to these imperfect records. If the courteous companion of my journey through the past wish to learn about them, they must consult the common mother of all the Faithful, who treasures up in her better memory the acts and virtues of her Pontiffs and their Fathers.

"Hactenus annorum, Comites, elementa meorum  
Et memini, et meminisse juvat ; — scit cætera Mater."

STATIUS

THE END.

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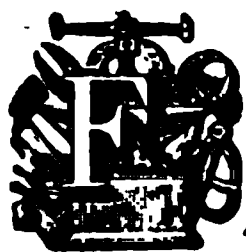
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Insimulari quivis innocens potest  
revinci nisi nocens non potest.

## *Carissimo Amico*



in dallo scorso Giugno, quando prima venivami annunziata la seconda edizione del tuo *Primato*, ti scrissi con quali disposizioni di animo io mi poneva di leggere le accuse e le parole acerbissime, che mi si dicevano dalla tua na accumulate contro la Compagnia di Gesù nella nuova *Avvertenza*.

Risoluto di non averti per altro da quello, ch' io sempre ti conobbi, cioè per mo diritto e generoso e degno amico mio, mi prometteva altresì fin d'allora di aver punto a mutare il concetto e l'amore, che mi stringe come fratello a coloro, Tu denunzii a tanta infamia.

Nè vorrai credere, che io sia uomo sì leggero o sì impetuoso da aver poscia duto all'alternativa di dover rinunziare o alla tua amicizia, o a quella fra le cui br conduco i miei giorni in questo Sodalizio.

Io confido di non aver demeritato il tutt'altro concetto, che prima d'ora ave me. Son certo anzi, che quante volte la tua mano inorridita de' quadri, che va ritr do della nequizia de' Gesuiti, sembra rimoversi dall'opera, o temperarne i colori, e na sulle proteste, che non tutti i Gesuiti sono poi sì scellerati, altrettante Tu mi r davi fra coloro, che meritano ancora la tua stima.—E prima di giudicarmi o sì da dover esser involto nel medesimo odio, che porti agli ipocriti e agli intriganti sì debole e vile da sacrificare alcun mio amico all'amor proprio o alle altrui suggesti, avrai amato meglio di persuaderti, ch' io fossi fra i Gesuiti una di quelle vit innocenti della loro artificiosa pietà — guadagnato alla loro Compagnia per l'a renza di virtù, che sanno serbare coi semplici — epperò niente meno disposto a patia verso i buoni amici, che ho lasciati nel mondo, ed i virtuosi sensi che Tu e mi nel tuo libro.

Pellico, dicevi per avventura fra te stesso, vedrà le mie intenzioni, e saprà le si con me alle mire ispiratemi dall'amor della patria — ma mi dirà ingannato sul particolare de' Gesuiti, cui egli conosce solo dal lato delle virtù, onde illudono il bel cuore. Non saprà cessare di averli per suoi buoni padri e fratelli, ma interà le mie parole ad illusione di zelo, nè saprà volermene male.

Or però io non mi appagherei d'esser tenuto per così fedele alla Compagnia agli amici, che ho fuori di quella, in virtù solo d'un'eccessiva semplicità, o bontà cuore.

Fossi anche stato fin qui nell'illusione, allacciato all'amore della Compagnia solo effetto delle arti ipocrite de' Gesuiti, puoi pur credere, che al modo, con cui p



fratelli, e più dovresti tener conto del dolore, della tristezza, dello sdegno, che i tratti più fieri del tuo scritto hanno potuto ispirarmi.—Il tuo linguaggio, le tue vettive, le conclusioni con che risolvì il bando, o lo sterminio della Compagnia, s'anno talora, sì conformi al parlare degli empî, che a perdonartelo, e a sopporvi sotto intenzioni generose e pie, no certo, non mi bastava l'indole affettuosa ed indulgente, che in me puoi conoscere.—E quell'orribile marchio d'infamia, che Tu mi stai in fronte e sulla veste al cospetto de' miei cittadini e di tutta Italia e di tutti gli uomini, credi Tu, che non mi provochi a confusione, e a ribrezzo? E per risolvermi come a portare quell'infamia, con tutte le sue conseguenze—e intanto non cessare di amarti, e volerti ogni bene, credi Tu, che mi bastino motivi illusorii di virtù? e che non abbia dovuto ricorrere, se mai altra volta, in questi giorni almeno, alla più seria considerazione e del nostro Istituto? e del modo, con cui attualmente si osserva? e del come assolvere la Compagnia dalle colpe, che le si appongono, o salvare lungi dal seno la mia innocenza e il mio onore?

Puoi pur dunque rimaner persuaso, che la mia perseveranza in amare la Compagnia di Gesù e te con essa, non è punto bonarietà naturale, ma proposito di scienza illuminata da' principî e da' fatti.

Grazie a Dio non ho per anco rinnegato la coscienza, e conosco abbastanza il Vangelo, e vedo pur alcun poco più da vicino, che Tu non possa, le regole e la condotta de' miei Superiori e de' miei fratelli in questa Compagnia; e scorgo che se è un mondo sincera emulazion di virtù, se è santa società di interessi celesti, se è ancora traccia di quel vivere, che prima distinse i seguaci degli Apostoli, se infine è fra uomini vincolo onorato e dolcissimo di amicizia, qui tutto ho trovato e posseggo. Nè la coscienza od il Vangelo mi fanno qui ravvisare alcuna di quelle indegnità, che Tu descrivi, ed io detesterei al pari di Te.

Così serbo io a buon diritto il sacro legame, che mi vincola alla Compagnia.

Ma non fosse in lei altro di lodevole, e di divino, certo vi scorgo ancora tanta carità verso gli uomini, da confortarmi con incessanti esempi a faticare, a morire, a tutto sacrificare, se occorresse, eziandio per amor di un barbaro.

E potrei dimenticare, che tu fosti de' primi fra i pochi amici, che la Provvidenza mi fece incontrare a decoro e sostegno della mia gioventù? E il grado, che puoi conseguire fra i campioni della Chiesa e della patria, non deve esser per me un nuovo motivo di più amarti? O la terribile potenza, onde ti è avvenuto di usare, non ti faarmi rivolgere a te, prima che ad altri troppo da meno, quell'ardore di carità, che vince ogni male, e lo ripara?

Vedi dunque, che non per cieca semplicità e bontà di cuore, non per fredda apatia, o stolta ostentazione di fermezza, io mi dico tuttora affezionato alla Compagnia, ed a te suo assalitore — Ma quell'assalto istesso, dopo riscossomi a considerare la mia posizione e i miei doveri, mi ha acceso vieppiù entrambi que' sacri affetti.

Non può tuttavia questo solo tributo del cuore soddisfare a tutto il mio debito verso la verità e la giustizia.

Se ne' tuoi sinistri giudizi intorno all'essere presente della Compagnia di Gesù Tu seguisti in buona fede un inganno, io ti devo una chiara testimonianza de' fatti quali sono.

Se le presenti disposizioni del tuo animo lo facessero sordo alla mia testimonianza, questa devo per altra parte al mio onore, alla Compagnia, a conforto de' suoi amici e della Chiesa.

Nè intraprendo per ciò una compiuta Apologia de' Gesuiti — Non son da tanto da assumere sì nobile ufficio — Nè veramente occorre. Due anni fa, qualunque fo-

dell'Italia. — Ma ti è sembrato, che i fatti recenti della Compagnia, avessero tu-  
to queste speranze, — e prendendo occasione da questi fatti per te si certi,  
sè stessi sì brutti, ti fai un dovere di dannare tutto quel passato, che avrebbe  
ma trovato presso di te qualche indulgenza, e di darci in balia all'odio univer-

Tutta la questione verte adunque principalmente sopra la verità di questi  
recenti. Cancellati questi, ti prenderebbe forse alcun pudore di comparir per nul-  
tro, che eco di vecchie accuse, già ad una ad una cento volte smentite.

Or bene questi fatti recenti, sì decisivi, sono in verità tutt'altri da quelli, che  
li supponi, e de' più di essi io sono testimonio più idoneo e degno di fede, di qu-  
che altri o della Compagnia, o di fuori possa dire di sè.

So bene, che si dice, che quanto più un Gesuita è d'indole retta e virtuosa  
trettanto è meno atto a render testimonianza intorno alle cose della Compagnia  
perchè non sarà mai, che gli astuti regolatori di quella confidino ad uomo siffatto  
segreto delle lor arti, le quali richiedono coscienze perdute come le loro. — Ma  
lascio che si applaudisca chi vuole di questa stupenda penetrazione, onde scuopre  
i Gesuiti sì bene associati i lupi e gli agnelli — che mentre quelli non perdono l-  
dole loro ferina, questi ne perdano pur ogni ribrezzo, e anzi senza avvedersene d-  
mano alle stragi, che quelli fanno di continuo ne' pascoli e nelle foreste. — Qu-  
acuto concetto dee giovare assai la critica voluta a creare la storia della Com-  
gnia nel modo che conviene a certi fini. Perchè posto da banda ogni testimonio  
mestico, che in altre storie avrebbe sempre un suo valore, resta in riguardo a  
suits, che non si ascolti altri fuorchè i lor nemici, o chi sia straniero ai fatti loro.

Ciò non toglie però, ch'io meriti in questo caso un'eccezione. Tu argoment-  
pra fatti dovuti esser manifesti. — Se ne sai Tu da lungi alcuna cosa, consen-  
ch'io ne parli, come chi li ha visti e trattati dappresso e per officio. — Tu argom-  
ti da questi, o altri somiglianti fatti l'intimo stato di depravazione dell'Ordine int-  
— Ma, ripeto, se Tu non hai miglior modo di giudicare di quest'intima univer-  
depravazione fuorchè da' fatti esterni, quali son questi, confesserai, che già no-  
tratta di misteri, che sian potuti celarsi ai miei occhi.

Anzi consentirai, ch'io mi valga della mia condizione la quale mi mette me-  
di te, o d'altro qualsiasi tuo corrispondente, in abituale contatto con questi Relig-  
per dirti quali essi siano veramente, e quale la loro condotta, quale lo spirito ch-  
regge, l'interesse che li unisce, le virtù con cui sostengono per *infamiam et bon-*  
*famam* il primitivo carattere della lor vocazione.

Sono omai undici anni, ch'io vedo, o tratto in questa Provincia le princi-  
parti di tutta la Macchina Gesuitica, così gli affari, cioè, come le persone.

Dopo due anni di Noviziato sono stato condotto fra le solite prove al supr-  
grado, che è fra noi la Professione solenne de' quattro voti. — Fui frattanto sei  
Maestro de' Novizi, attualmente sono da due anni Segretario del Provinciale negli  
sardi, e compagno suo nell'annua visita di tutti i Collegii di sua dipendenza.  
E in ciascuno de' miei ufficii sono stato in relazione immediata col nostro P-  
Generale.

Or solo che queste mie qualità, non ti costringano a credermi mutato in ins-  
impostore, per esse io dovrei valere presso di te, e presso qualunque persona razi-  
vole, quale idoneo testimonio della verità, o falsità delle molte cose, che scrivi  
torno a' Gesuiti di questi tempi e di questo paese, e in generale dell'attuale osserva-  
o alterazione del loro Istituto.

E ricorda inoltre, che undici anni fa, quando entrai Novizio della Compagnia  
Gesù, io non era nè per età, nè per tempra di animo punto disposto ad essere  
volmente sedotto, dominato, trasformato come supporresti un pio scolaro.

Anzi per non dire qui tutta la diffidenza, ch'io nutriva fra le poche e recentissime relazioni formate prima d'allora co' Padri di quest' Ordine, ti basti il ricordare che l'atmosfera, la quale entrambi del pari circondava, non era niente temperata ad infondere simpatia verso que' Religiosi.

Non potei dunque entrare fra loro se non ad occhi aperti. — Volli vedere, intendere; nè mi fu vietato. — Con intero sotto gli occhi l'Istituto primitivo, ed evidente la pratica attuale de' doveri domestici, delle scuole, de' ministeri io vidi, via via che l'osservanza è esatta, fervente, tale appunto da mantenere intiera la Compagnia in quel perpetuo suo grado di virtù, che la fa segno di contraddizione fra i Cristiani: dagli uni amata come immagine viva del Nazareno, dagli altri avuta come Lui in conto di stoltezza e di scandalo.

Passato frattanto sotto il governo di tre Provinciali e di varii Rettori, non solo vidi il modo pieno di semplicità, con che si procede in questa sorta di relazioni, ma ora raccolgo fra le mani tutti gli atti loro degli anni addietro, e vedo dal centro della Provincia, e nelle visite delle loro case quale sia il loro operare — e sento da ogni lato, in che modo altri giudichi di loro, ed essi a vicenda formino giudizio dell'andamento d'ogni cosa di loro spettanza.

E vuoi credere, che una sì profonda depravazione quale Tu descrivi (e certo non potesti vedere dappresso), io non fossi stato per iscorgerla mai, o scorgendola abbia potuto dissimularla alla mia coscienza, e anzi io giunga per istoltezza o perversità a questo punto di non aprire gli occhi ai tuoi argomenti, e di osarli ora negare contro l'intima mia fede?

Ad ogni modo se ami la verità, senza riguardo a chi la dica, non isdegnare la semplice esposizione ch'io prendo a farti delle cose nostre, da quel testimonio che ne sono. — Anche senza impegnarti a credere a me solo, ciò ch'io dirò potrà metterti sulla via di giungere a più esatta notizia così de' pochi fatti recenti, che sono una parte principale del tuo argomento, come dell'usato nostro operare.

Parlando de' fatti, potrà accadere, ch'io risalga agli intimi principii della nostra condotta, o delle tue teorie, ma non dimenticherò l'assunto precipuo, ch'io prendo qui in qualità di testimonio. — Dai fatti recenti risalirò per avventura più o meno a rammentare la storia della soppressione e del ristabilimento di questa nostra società, ma il farò tanto solo quanto sarà necessario a derivarne luce sopra l'attuale condizione di essa nel mondo, e sopra le speranze, che sono a concepirsi de' suoi servizi in Europa.

Ecco frattanto una schietta dichiarazione, con cui voglio prevenire le ombre troppo naturali a potersi formare nella fantasia di certuni, i quali professando qualche simpatia o per Te o per noi, si credano interessati in questo mio scritto.

Amico, da molti anni, di Gioberti, io protesto, che se v'ha chi goda di vedermi da me contraddetto, invano però s'aspetteranno i maligni, ch'io loro dia il gusto di vedermi da me insultata la sua persona — E prego anzi i buoni, i quali avessero a biasimare in qualche cosa, di rispettare alla mia presenza un'amicizia, la quale mi' impegna, ove non gli conosca un torto manifesto, a prendere la sua difesa.

Già so, che i miei fratelli non pretendono, che la loro innocenza venga vendicata con le armi del risentimento. Coloro stessi fra i Gesuiti, i quali più sentono il traggio fatto da Gioberti alla lor professione, son quelli, che usati a respirare nelle sfere superiori del pensiero la medesima aura celeste che lui, già gli si erano legati dal fondo dell'anima in nobilissima comunanza di principii e di voti; or questi certamente non mi consentirebbero d'usar con esso uno stile sì aspro, che cancellasse per loro ogni speranza di ricongiungersi anche meglio che prima in società di studi.

di Dio e della Chiesa, non che perdonarmi la moderazione, con cui prendo a respingere quest'ultimo assalto sì fiero, dato alla compagnia, son essi i primi a confidare nelle sole armi della pazienza, della carità, e di tali opere, che suentiscano agli occhi di chi li osserva, le accuse sotto il cui peso son voluti opprimere. — Comunque però mi avvenga nel decorso di questo scritto, d'uscire di passaggio dalla sfera dei fatti per ammettere o per combattere alcuna teoria di Gioberti, io non consento in alcun modo, che della mia opinione siano fatti malleadori i miei fratelli. Se mai fu tempo, in cui questa pretesa comunità di opinioni, abbia potuto dar luogo ad ingiuste incolpazioni contro l'intera loro Società, certo sarebbe il tempo, che corre al presente, in cui il conflitto tra le dottrine antiche e le moderne è così vivo, che ad uomini colti e pratici della vita, educati sotto influenze diverse, e sparsi in paesi di diverso reggimento è impossibile astringersi ad altro fuorchè ai principî più comunemente professati nella Chiesa Cattolica. Bensì, chi scriva, o alzi cattedra contrae il debito di render ragione del suo pensare ad ogni legittimo giudice. Ma chi tace s' intende libero di andar formando le sue opinioni da sè, ed ha il diritto d'essere creduto abbastanza ragionevole da supervisi condurre.

V' ha finalmente chi spande varie voci intorno alle molle segrete, che potrebbero aver condotto Gioberti a scoppiare contro la Compagnia con parole sì forti e insospettate; ma protesto ancora qui, ch'io non voglio adoperare contro nessuno quell'arte, di che i nemici della Compagnia si giovano con tanta facilità contro di lei, facendo valere il sospetto di misteriosi maneggi, ch'io non possa provare con argomenti di fatto.

Finchè i maneggi di buona o di rea natura, ch'essi siano, hanno da essere operazioni e concerti nascosti al pubblico, il metterli in palese sarà sempre cosa tanto più difficile, quanto si suppongono condotti con più squisito magistero. — Ora finchè rimane dubbia una parte del preleso concerto — e tanto più finchè il tutto si riduce a sospetti e a congetture, altri potrà pur tenerne conto per la storia, ma non saprei farne caso pel merito d'una questione, che può terminarsi con argomenti suoi propri ed evidenti. — Che se si tratta poi di tali maneggi, che la coscienza riprovi, il produrne solo il sospetto o l'apparenza spogliata di sufficienti prove, non giova fuorchè a ferire l'onore degli avversarii, — ed equivale alla calunnia — e volge quasi a qualsiasi questione più sublime, in un semenzaio di ingiurie.

Io sto allo scritto qual'è — in esso Gioberti ha manifestato quanto basta la sincerità — e poichè professa di non essere mosso fuorchè da sè, e da intenzioni così pure come son quelle cui, esprime con tanto vigore, non mi occorre cercare misteri.

Bensì mi è evidente, ch'egli scrive dietro le relazioni, che gli furono date da altri intorno alle cose nostre, così dalla Svizzera, come dal Piemonte, o da altre parti.

E riconoscendo che cosiffatte relazioni non furono esatte, e che bastarono pur troppo ad accendere Gioberti ad uno sdegno eccessivo contro la Compagnia, ch'egli aveva dianzi lodata, io prendo con ingenuità, e sincero amor di pace a rettificare giusta la notizia che ho per veduta e per pratica de' fatti di cui si tratta.

Al valore della mia testimonianza non vorrà certamente far danno la delicatezza, con cui mi impongo di tacere per lo più il nome delle persone, che potrebbero essere invocate ad appoggiarla. — La mia sincerità è guarentita abbastanza con la pubblicità che do a questo scritto. — Il pretendere da me l'esposizione più intiera di certe circostanze, ancor favorevoli alla causa che ho tra le mani, sarebbe un abuso della condizione, la quale mi assoggetta a molti riguardi.

Del resto : *Nihil est opertum, quod non revelabitur*. Questa parola mi sgomenta abbastanza dal volermi involuppare col velo della menzogna. Essa mi conforta a

insieme ed ornamento e velo.

## RICOVERO DE' MENDICI.

Prendo prima a dire di que' fatti più recenti e più specificati, donde ti pare siasi avuto argomento del mal animo de' Gesuiti verso ogni impresa ed ogni per che miri al progresso della civiltà in Piemonte.

Uno di questi fatti è imputato al P.\*\*\*, uomo dotto e di rara prudenza, ragionare pieno di moderazione è di zelo santo, non sarà qui da me comme con linguaggio sospetto di parzialità, ma riceve giusta testimonianza da' Torinesi accorrono da sei anni ad udirlo in pulpito, o a consultarlo in privato. Ma vien credere che fra coloro, i quali te lo denunziarono per uomo, che abusò de ministero, ancor predicando la carità cristiana, pochi fossero stati ad udirlo, o ro prima d' allora giunti oltre alla metà del primo volume del tuo *Primato* da pag. 334 e 335 ( 1.<sup>a</sup> Ediz. ) tu pure discorri della filantropia, in uno stile, non si sarebbe permesso.

Chi avea ivi letto come *le Associazioni benefiche de' laici sono una steffiacca imitazione dei Chiostri. e non producono a uno per cento i frutti di sti, quando essi chiostri siano bene ordinati* — e come tu lodi queste Associaz in quanto cioè possono giovare *TALVOLTA*. e mostrano, se non altro, il buo lere de' cooperatori. Ma che l'umanità ne guadagna poco — conciossiachè sono date sulla semplice filantropia. La filantropia esser ottima in sè stessa, m poter supplire alla carità, come movente efficace di beneficenza — Imper tu trovi, che i filantropi discorrono a meraviglia di questa virtù, novero classificano i dolori, contano quasi i sospiri e le lagrime dei poveri uomini molta esattezza, e ne propongono i rimedii; ma quando questi non siano d li che dipendono da chi regge, non veder che i filosofi filantropici abbiano ra saputo applicarli. — E ciò parerti sì naturale; perchè la filantropia me pratica, non essendo più una faccenda, che si possa spedire coi discorsi libri, ma un continuo e penoso olocausto della propria persona ad altrui b cio è umanamente impossibile, senza quegli stimoli efficacissimi, cui la Re ne sola può dare; chi fosse giunto una linea più sotto a leggere: *Se volete tuare i vostri benevoli concetti, scemando al poss'ibile e alleviando le uman serie, valetevi dei frati*; — o chi si fosse ricordato di questa tua predica, l'avesse riputata sì brutta macchia d' un' opera per altre parti applaudita tra i zelatori delle virtù cittadine, avrebbe potuto rallegrarsi in udire il Gesuita a dietro, ancorchè il paresse fare con termini assai più misurati, e ne avrebbe concepire speranza, ch' ei fosse nel novero de' tuoi discepoli.

Se non che il predicatore non ambiva più oltre al comparire ed essere di lo del Vangelo — ed era naturale, che in questa materia, per altrettanto c cordasse con te, o si rimanesse dal ripetere le tue espressioni, quanto la sosta quel tuo dire è pur esso tutto Evangelico, ma i termini alludono a particola o meno lontani dal caso suo, o tali, cui è pregio dell' oratore cristiano di sopra, ogni volta, che possano suscitare commozioni contrarie al suo sco ligioso.

Laonde io non dubito di affermare, che se invece di dover far inchiesta d de' fatti nostri, tu stesso ti fosti trovato almeno in questa circostanza a' miei fi ad udire, com' io feci, il P.\*\*\*, lungi dall' imputargli d' aver eletto il temp gridare ed invciare contro gli asili ospitali de' poveri, e sputato veleno



*l' esempio* ( Proleg. pag. 138 ), ti saresti per avventura sdegnato dell' udirlo accennare bensì alcuni problemi pratici dove è più agevole ai filantropi l' illudersi, o il venir meno, ma poi, dati niente più, che i principî generali della carità evangelica lasciata da lui la soluzione a giudizio d' altri.

Ma doveva accadere al P.\*\*\* ciò che in altre materie a te. Il Predicatore e Scrittore devono starsi rassegnati ad essere frantesi — e questa tribolazione è tanto più di chi parla, che non di chi scrive, in quanto le espressioni volute adoperare dal scrittore ad enunziare il suo concetto rimangono vive in carta, pronte a tornare sotto gli occhi di chi le voglia scandagliare, laddove la parola dell' oratore fugge, e se prima non fu colta a dovere, non ne rimane traccia, che la riproduca esattamente alla memoria dell' uditore.

Nè cerco più oltre delle passioni che indispongono talvolta così chi ascolta, come chi legge. Di tu qual possa essere stata quella, che nell' udirne un discorso tutto di carità, ispirò il pensiero di armare ingiusti sdegni. Sebbene meglio, che non congetturando i verisimili, io ti posso condurre al vero, esponendo i fatti precisi, e notissimamente a tutto il paese.

È in Torino un ricovero di mendici, alimentato dalla pubblica e dalla privata carità di quel popolo religiosissimo. Allato al Ricovero sorge una bella Chiesa, alzata a posta dalle fondamenta pegli esercizi cristiani de' poveri in esso raccolti. Il pietoso istituto è retto da una società di illustri personaggi decorati ancora di dignità Ecclesiastiche. Sarà questo Ospizio, che il predicatore accennasse per esempio di istituti non cristiani?

Ciò nondimeno perchè, così assurda a concepirsi, l' ingiuria aveva il merito d' essere atroce, giovò a meraviglia a chi volle calunniare il P.\*\*\*, presso i Sig. Amministratori del Ricovero, che non erano stati presenti alla predica.

La calunnia non era meno crudele a ferir loro, che il Gesuita. E quegli animi generosi, che avrebbero saputo perdonare un' ingiuria personale, all' udirne spogliati i loro poveri del nome di Cristiani, che li affratella con chi può e deve alimentarli, scomunicati dalla Carità Cattolica e che di un tal eccesso di malignità si diceva essere stato teatro la Chiesa, e stromento la parola di Dio travisata da un Sacerdote, ebbero per cosa da doversene a Dio ed agli uomini condegna soddisfazione — e sì l' esigerla era giustizia, era pietà, in quanto avean per vero ciò, che gliene era dato credere da altri.

Non fu infatti la voce del pubblico già presente al discorso del P.\*\*\* quella, che sparse aver egli denunziato quella istituzione di beneficenza come non punto cristiana. — Questa voce si andò spargendo per la giusta simpatia, che in città faceva partecipi del dolore di que' Signori, non solo i loro attinenti, ma via via le molte ottime persone, che non udita la predica, erano ben più consapevoli de' titoli di que' benemeriti alla pubblica venerazione, che non de' fatti de' Gesuiti.

Anzi troppo eran diverse le voci di altri, ancorchè impegnati a biasimar il Gesuita; fra la quale confusione di varianti era impossibile, che alcuna si avesse per legittima da chi non era conscio d' aver udito con le proprie orecchie, e con animo pacato, l' intero ragionamento tenuto in pulpito.

All' udirne di certuni, non le persone venerande per cattolico zelo di carità erano state ferite, ma sì i filantropi puri; non quel Ricovero notoriamente cristiano: ma gli istituti vagheggiati dai filantropi di genio eterodosso; e quello essere il gran torto del P.\*\*\* l' aver offeso il pubblico, l' umanità, la civiltà moderna, nel diritto di foggarsi una maniera di carità di altro spirito o di altra forma da quella della Chiesa Cattolica.

Questi aveano udito per avventura, che il P.\*\*\* aveva contrapposto la carità a

alle opere più pieuose e degne per sè stesse del cristiano un carattere men sacro e da un discorso pieno di filosofia sopra un punto di morale di tanta luce e di importanza, s'argomentarono, che il Gesuita fosse sì indietro di greco o di latino, ignaro della Scrittura, o della teologia, d'aver veduto o voluto mostrare perfino ne' legittimi nomi di *filantropia*, di *largizioni*, di *sovvenzioni*, di *ricoveri*, o di *carità* una profanità scandalosa, un'eresia, un oggetto di anatema.

Così il predicatore della carità, que' che aveva levato i poveri alla qualità, più li nobilita, e rende cari all'uom cristiano, mostrando in essi sovra ogni altro quello d'immagini dell'Uomo-Dio, que' che ad avvivare, e dirigere, e fecondare il natural senso di pietà verso gli infelici, voleva infonder ne' cuori un più puro principio di carità tutto divina, que' che insegnava ad assicurare ad ogni opera di beneficenza dopo l'utile e la soddisfazione da raccogliersene su questa terra, una mercede di gloria e di beatitudine senza fine nell'altra vita, quest'uomo fu fatto comparire odioso a due parti opposte di cittadini. Nel che se fu alcun'arte meditata, (ch'io non vo cercarne, e non sarebbe nuova) questa dovette riuscire tanto più agevolmente, quanto il popolo torinese accoppia meglio e lo zelo di carità religiosa, e lodevole vaghezza di imitare ogni concetto, ancorchè straniero, che torni a prosperità e a decoro della patria.

Ecco dunque, se posso aver fede ai miei orecchi, e meritare presso di te la tua credenza, ecco rettificato il fatto, intorno al quale ti abbandoni a tante invettive.

La dichiarazione della predica del P.\*\*\* non esigerebbe ch'io aggiungessi altro. Degno era però, che fra coloro, i quali aveano creduto offesa dal P.\*\*\* o la filantropia, o la carità cristiana, quella parte sola prevalesse in Torino, quasi espressione del vero patrio senso, la quale professando con la Chiesa, e con le tradizioni de' maggiori, ciò stesso, che il P.\*\*\* avea predicato, (cioè, *la carità de' Cattolici, e meritoria carità eterna dover essere animata da motivi secondo Cristo*), di null'altro valea render conto al Gesuita, se non della supposta calunnia, contro una creazione di lei, e che si l'avesse data per creazione di eterodossa filantropia.

Una gara siffatta, se tale si può appellare, era nobile e santa, e dovea condurre così a trionfo della verità Evangelica, ne' cui termini era stato il P.\*\*\*. come a quella della perpetua carità de' torinesi, sempre seconda di nuove istituzioni. Ora a spianare la via a questo termine, con la possibile soddisfazione di quanti erano stati adirati dalle voci corse in quei giorni, provvide Iddio col favorire il consiglio de' zelatori del Ricovero.

Loro consiglio fu di far ristampare l'opera della *Mendicità sbandita* già pubblicata in Torino dal Gesuita Guevarre, quando chiamatovi di Francia nel 1716. Il Duca Vittorio Amedeo II, vi fondò l'ospedale detto di Carità a ricovero de' mendicanti, vi istituì la distribuzione de' soccorsi a domicilio in favore di quelli, che alcun rigido vietasse di forzare al ritiro.

Il pensiero di questa ristampa, perchè diretto da un fine virtuoso, fu secondato da felici conseguenze.

Il pubblico vide in quello specchio l'idea della Carità de' suoi maggiori, e come a buon diritto ne partecipi la lode di Cristiana, ed utile, e savia l'istituzione reale del Ricovero, e come il P.\*\*\* avesse di fatto abbracciato nella sua predica il concetto dell'incessante lavoro, che collega nelle opere di pia beneficenza tante generazioni di torinesi e di Gesuiti (1).

(1) Dal P. Guevarre fino alla soppressione della Compagnia erano stati alla direzione generale degli Ospedali di Carità di tutto il Piemonte i religiosi di quella, fra i quali uno de' ultimi fu il P. Bruno di San Giorgio.

in un momento dove troppi affetti contrari onuscavano il vero.

La data del 1.<sup>o</sup> Gennaio 1845, ch'io vedo appiedi della tua *Avvertenza*, ti giovi di scusa; ma sia un argomento di più a dimostrare, che in tempi di gare e di invidie una scrittura *palpitante*, come dicesi, *di attualità*, o esige intima e positiva cognizione de' fatti, e altissima libertà di spirito — o riesce miseramente a nulla più fuorchè a pascolo e a monumento di passioni volgari.

### SARDEGNA, BATTELLI A VAPORE, STRADE.

Passiamo ora a quell'altra accusa, che sarebbe sì grave, se per estrema ridicolezza non fosse resa anche essa incredibile, che cioè i Gesuiti predicano dal pulpito contro i *Vapori*, o contro le Strade.

A prendere sul serio una cosa, che certo non ti sfuggì inavvertita dalla penna, e deve avere un qualsiasi fondamento di verità sopra fatti, che altri ti avrà riferiti, io non vedo in tutto ciò, che pervenne in questi anni a mia notizia de' fatti veri o supposti, o mal interpretati d'alcun mio fratello, alcuna circostanza possibile a riferirai alla anzidetta colpa, se non è per avventura questa, che son per dire.

Fra le lodi ben meritate da quel popolo generoso che è il popolo Sardo, gli attribuisce quella di non avere nè uso, nè idea della bestemmia. — Non è egli da considerare che dal commercio, onde quell'isola ha da dover rifiorire a proprio lustro e a pro di tutto lo stato, sia esclusa per quanto è possibile questa peste, estrema degradazione di una mente ragionevole, abuso sì esecrando del prezioso dono della parola?

Una vita operosa e socievole sbandisse l'ozio, la penuria, la mutua diffidenza con tutta la sequela di mali gravissimi, che a quelli tien dietro, tal è il voto, la speranza de' Gesuiti in favore della Sardegna; chè sebbene non sia possibile in terra d'ordine di cose, il quale escluda ogni male, certo però la civiltà più colta è quello stato, che ai propri danni porta con sè stessa migliori rimedii. — Ma se alcuno ancor questi danni in tutto dipendenti dall'arbitrio e dall'educazione si potesse antivenire, tenersi alquanto lontano, l'adoperarsi in questa mira non sarebbe essa lode d'ogni Sacerdote?

Or bene ei viene talvolta in acconcio ai Pastori Ecclesiastici, ed ai missionari Gesuiti della Sardegna il discorrere in questo senso: « Se ha da sorgere per questa vostra patria un'epoca novella di prosperità temporale, se le pubbliche istituzioni, le strade, i porti, i *Vapori*, si offrono a prevenire, a secondare i vostri sforzi nel migliorare, che volete l'agricoltura, o nello stendere il vostro commercio, sappiate non rimanervi neghittosi ed ingrati. — Ma se v'invaghite di una prosperità, e di uno splendore, che vi mette al pari delle nazioni più colte di Europa, non siate ingrati neppure a' vostri maggiori; e il più caro de' vostri tesori, e da custodirsi con maggior gelosia, siano quella fede intemerata, quell'onestà, quell'antico decoro del costume e del linguaggio ereditato da' padri vostri. Non ogni merce straniera, che giunga ai vostri lidi, è oro da arricchirvi. E mentre vogliamo lasciare al vostro discernimento, la parte materiale di qualsiasi traffico onde abbia a tornarvi alcun guadagno, non cesseremo dal gridare in grazia dell'anima vostra, e del vostro onore: *bando alla bestemmia, bando ad ogni vizio* che avesse a trarre la Divina maledizione sopra questa terra, e a frustrare le mire benefiche, di chi lavorava alla vostra felicità. »

È egli questo a tuo modo d'intendere un maledire le nove strade dell'interno, i *Vapori* e con essi il felice impulso, che sveglia la Sardegna all'attività del commercio? Eppure questo, e non altro, è ciò ch'io udii quest'anno aver dato occasione



Oh, caro Amico; tu che ti sdegni sì nobilmente contro le menti piccole, e le basse invidie — cessa dal credere che tali siano o per natura o per volontaria perversità i Gesuiti, — altrimenti tu vedi, che nel ripetere con tanta solennità le insulse cose suggerite da chi o non ci conosce, o può ragionevolmente esser sospetto amarci, ti accadrà più d'una volta d'avere ad arrossire d'essere stato infelice strumento al trionfo dell'ignoranza, o della mala fede (1).

## ABOLIZIONE DEL FEUDALISMO IN SARDEGNA.

Ma poichè siamo a discorrere della Sardegna proseguiamo a mettere in un altro errore di fatto intorno alla condotta, che supponi tenersi dai Gesuiti di l'isola. — Tu denunzi con molto strepito i miei fratelli di colà, come disapprovatori della savia riforma, con che il governo venne ad abolire le ultime vestigie feudali che si trovavano ancora in quella parte de' regii stati. E sopra questo tema sì pasci d'invidia, tiri avanti, non so se con più arte o sdegno, certo con deplorabile fatica di argomentare sul vero, a declamare in linguaggio ben poco caritatevole: *Eccoli i singolari difensori della monarchia, che usano ogni industria per renderla ridicola, odiosa, contennenda, insopportabile all'universale!* (proleg. p. 1).

Or che è egli di tutto ciò? Io ho visitato due volte in questi ultimi anni la Sardegna, mi son trattenuto ogni volta più settimane così in Sassari, come in Cagliari. Vi ebbi varie relazioni non che coi nostri domestici, coi Prelati e coi Signori. Udii, trattai varii generi di affari e di persone — e l'abolizione del feudalismo parve sentita generalmente dai nostri religiosi e da tutti, come operazione, le difficoltà inevitabili non avrebbero mai dovuto impedirne l'impresa, sì chiaro è il vantaggio che ha da tornarne all'agricoltura, e al complesso delle civili relazioni.

Chi 'l crederebbe pertanto, solamerò, se non è uomo ostinato a credere sempre di noi il peggio, che soli contro di tutti, anzi discordi dal proprio buon senso, per mania di comparire stolti e provocatori dello sdegno di chi ci vuol bene, andiamo predicando o mormorando contro la riforma operata?

Forse perchè il Ministro di pace accoglie il lamento del povero, quando il nuovo ordine di cose lo getta in momentanee strettezze, vuoi che il regio poter adombri? O chiami fautore de' malcontenti il Sacerdote, perchè fedele al dovere scende infino a loro, e con un codice di carità divina supplisce all'insufficienza d'un più perfetto codice umano?

Forse non basta ai Gesuiti ripetere: *Reddite quae sunt Caesaris, Caesaribus*?

(1) Appena si parlava in Piemonte delle macchine a vapore, e, come parecchi il rammentano, ne ha il prospetto a stampa, i nostri scolari di Novara eran mossi dai PP. Piaciani e Minini a insegnare in solenne Accademia quanto il secolo si ripromettesse delle future applicazioni di quel potente motore agli usi, che ora vediamo.

Non abbiamo Collegio dove il Professore di Fisica non porga la teoria, e non ispieghi il meccanismo di tali forze.

L'anno 1844 si chiudevano gli Studi de' nostri Nobili Convittori di Roma con un trattenimento di scienze naturali, parte del quale fu intorno ad un modello di *Strada ferrata, con Wagone* ricevuto in dono dal Sommo Pontefice.

Quest'anno il P. Della Rovere andando dietro alla scoperta dell'Ab. Dal Negro, e del Botto vi diede in simile circostanza un saggio dell'applicazione dell'elettro-magnetismo al movimento delle macchine. Il suo saggio di telegrafo elettrico non sarebbe punto più acconciamente provato che i nostri studi vadano a ritroso del secolo rispetto ad alcuna guisa di comunicazione sociale.

I medesimi esperimenti furono ripetuti a Tivoli alla presenza di Sua Santità, degnatasi di rendere di sua visita la Villeggiatura del Convitto.

lusinga per le civili o politiche ordinazioni?

O siamo noi condannati per destino o impegnati per professione a contraddire perpetuamente l'autorità de' principi e la libertà de' popoli, e allor con più rabbia che principe e popolo più cospirano alla comune felicità?

Meno assurdo parrebbe supporre, che in questioni di civil riforma ogni parte abbia fra i suoi e uomini di senno e guasta-mestieri: generosi gli uni e prudenti, gli altri condotti da cieco entusiasmo, o ipocriti o interessati. In questa ipotesi io intendendo che anche divisi in parti opposte, gli uomini retti concordano nel volere il bene — e patrocinatori dell'antico consentano alle innovazioni salutari, e promotori di queste ad un procedere misurato; e gli uni e gli altri, sapendo le cose avere cento facce, non si sdegnano dell'altrui dissentire, quanto amano che mettansi in comune i lumi di ognuno per giungere a un accordo, che il vincere sia pro di tutti.

Non così il volgo. Non retta stima di cose lo guida, ma fantasia e passione: non bontà di causa cui piaccia associarsi vale a meritargli lode di saviezza: ma pugnanza fra sè i pretesi amanti di civiltà e i tenaci dell'antico, quanto a logica e a moderazione gli uni si mostrano niente men barbari o sfrenati degli altri. — Questa ipotesi non spiegherebbe il tanto inveire contro noi di coloro, che sotto bandiera di qualsiasi util riforma sono i più. — Il volgo de' novatori si è foggiato nel gesuitismo un oggetto contro cui è beato di esalare ogni suo sdegno. In quanto gesuitismo suona religione, rispetto alla Chiesa e ai diritti vale a molti un freno da spezzare, una tirannia da sbarbarie da sterminarsi. Quindi per analogia ogni freno, tirannia e barbarie non meno che ogni diritto ed autorità è presso loro gesuita e gesuitismo. — E perchè chiunque lor dispiaccia, sia di spada o di toga è da loro maledetto sotto il nostro nome: le cose a noi più straniere e contrarie, ci sono del pari imputate.

Di grazia verifica questa mia che ti vo' dar per ipotesi e se tanto avviene così in Sardegna come altrove, e se non sono altrimenti disapprovatori delle civili riforme ben mi pare che gli amici di quel popolo non avranno a negare simpatia a que' Missionarii nostri, che lungi dalle Università e dalle Capitali vanno a piantare con gran fatica, e promuovere nelle parti meno accessibili dell'isola i salutari principi di civiltà.

Son troppo pochi in vero al bisogno; e avessi forze da tanto, io pel primo vorrei ancora darmi a seguirli, e ad aiutarli per dividere la gloria di un Ministero sì bello e sì filantropo! — Non hanno essi al certo che fare nè che dire cogli illustri teorici del Continente — e tuttavia non è picciol merito, per uomini formati alle lettere e alle scienze, il rinunciare alle attrattive d'una vita di dotte speculazioni. — Ma troppo più care sono al Gesuita, e, grazie a Dio, ad ogni altro studioso del Vangelo, le attrattive d'una vita somigliante a quella di Gesù Cristo in mezzo alle povere turbe. — Ed è pur vicendevole l'amore di quelle turbe pe' loro Missionarii. Vive ancora in molte parti di Sardegna, e sempre benedetta la memoria di quelli, che prima della soppressione della Compagnia, avevano tanto meritato d'ogni buona civile istituzione.

Nell'Aprile di quest'anno stesso mi giungevano da un cospicuo Comune queste parole ben care certamente al povero Gesuita. « *Alla compagnia dobbiamo tutto.* » Padri ci hanno dato la norma del vivere laborioso e civile. Essi ci hanno insegnato a coltivare la vite, essi ci han recato i gelsi e i bachi da seta. Essi ci han lasciato in eredità que' principi di educazione, che hanno mantenuto fin qui fra noi quell'onestà e quella pace che le milizie non valgono a stabilire in altri villaggi.

Ma dove i presenti Missionarii non hanno stabile dimora, la loro opera comprende tuttavia e promuove efficacemente ogni guisa di utile riforma morale, cooperando in ciò allo zelo illuminato de' Venerandi Pastori preposti a ciascuna popolazione.

di Dio — e sono altrettante piaghe della repubblica sanata, altrettanti pegni di obbedienza alle leggi civili. Quanto però alcune di quelle popolazioni sono più lontane dal grado di civiltà, in che noi siamo nati, altrettanto ivi l'opera delle Missioni mostra più benemerita d'ogni sincero promotore del sociale progresso. Ivi sono armati fatti deporre ai piedi del Crocefisso, e convertiti in sincere, perpetue alleanze; ivi sono antiche e funeste superstizioni sradicate, sbandite, sostituitavi la pietà Cristiana, e la savia estimazione de' mezzi naturali; ivi sono matrimoni illimitati ridotti a norma delle leggi ecclesiastiche e civili; ivi sono infine introdotte leggi di ordine e di virtù, che riconciliano quegli animi gelosi della primitiva loro indipendenza, con quel potere il quale non restringe i loro diritti, ma cerca di collegarli in più ampia comunanza di vantaggi con tutto il corpo dello Stato.

Non so veramente se dopo ciò sia di più da esigersi, che il Missionario prenda cura de' *Vapori*, e delle strade, o la necessità di chiudere i boschi, e di coltivare i campi, o l'urgenza di procacciarsi con la fatica, e con l'economia onde pagare i tributi. — Ma certo il Gesuita è il primo a desiderare che tutto il paese si apra, e si spiani sotto ai suoi passi, e si ravvicini col frequente commercio al continente, e la pace, la prosperità temporale favorisca dappertutto l'incremento della semenza Evangelica.

E se la Nurra, se la Gallura, se l'Asinara e non poche altre parti dell'Isola delle Isolette adiacenti, rimangono tuttora poco meno che prive di Sacerdoti — Cristiani vi menano vita di Nomadi — o poco han progredito dalla condizione cui S. Gregorio il Grande rimproverava ai magnati d'allora d'averli trascurati — certo la colpa non è del Missionario Gesuita, cui basterebbe l'esser solo aiuto a piantare fra que' pastori un altare e una tenda, e loro consacrerebbe la vita.

### SCUOLE INFANTILI.

Ma già non sei discosto dal credere che le Missioni fra i popoli incolti ci stiano bene — la colta Europa è sola stanca di noi — e ben ne ha donde, poichè, da quel che tu asserisci, qui noi vogliamo trattenere, e canonizzare la barbarie, anzichè promuovere la già introdotta civiltà. E fra le altre prove date ultimamente di questo nostro manifesto disegno, ci siamo mostrati avversi alle *Scuole Infantili* — (Proleg. p. 138) *Nè abbiamo avuto rossore di maledire in Genova ed altrove dal pulpito Cristiano le pietose Scuole, seminando vili ed assurde calunnie contro l'uomo illibato e venerabile, a cui il Governo Sardo affidava l'assunto di avviare in Piemonte un benefico istituto.*

Il cielo perdoni però a chi facendosi un piacere di tenerti informato delle cose del paese, non prevede che tu andavi a valerti delle sue lettere, come di fidati documenti storici. Gli amici che ti mostrarono i Gesuiti in pulpito in atto di maledire senza rossore le pietose Scuole, hanno creduto di divertirti, e ti hanno dato la febbre. Ma vuoi ch'io ti calmi un tantino? Odi la pura e pubblica verità, cui non è da aggiungersi o da togliere un jota. Prima, da quel dire: di *Genova ed altrove*, togliamoci l'*altrove*: che è una giunta affatto gratuita. In Genova poi, a fatica ho potuto trovar memoria di questa tua accusa, tanto il numeroso uditorio, che avea inteso la predica cui sembri accennare, avea disprezzato il dire de' detrattori. Ecco ciò che mi si raccolse da uno specchiatissimo cavaliere testimonio dell'aneddoto, che sto per narrare. — In Genova dunque sì, sei anni sono incirca, si volle dire, che il predicatore (ed era un Padre conosciuto ed amato dalla gioventù di Torino e di Nova

curan d'udirle, o di verificare ciò che altri ne dica, s'insinuò fra le consulte della C  
vica amministrazione.

— Il torto del predicatore vi pareva manifesto, giacchè risultava, che una per  
sona mossa dal discorso di lui si era astenuta dal contribuire una non so qual sov  
venzione. Ma uno dei Sindaci, il Marchese Gian Luca Durazzo, uomo che progrediva  
coi lumi e benemerito della patria, *di grazia*, domanda, *è stato a codesta predica  
chi riferisce il danno avvenuto?* Eccellenza, no veramente, risponde que'che aveva  
mosso la querela, ma ho inteso a parlarne a questo modo. *Or bene* ripiglia il savi  
Signore, *io l'ho udita tutta, e non ho inteso parola contro le opere di beneficenza;  
ma solo, che a meritarse innanzi a Dio mercede nella vita eterna, ed augmen  
tarne ogni maggior pro alla civil società voglion esser mosse e condotte dalle  
Carità Evangelica.* E così fu dissipato con la più chiara, e pubblica ed autorevole  
testimonianza ogni sospetto, in che l'illustre consulta potesse essere trascinata dalle  
dicerie sparse in città. — Queste veramente non furono per ciò solo impedito dallo  
spandersi anche fuori, e dal giungere infino a te; anzi tal è la condizione d'ogni no  
vella più strana ed assurda: che abbia a potersi spacciare più agevolmente dove non  
siano testimonii che la smentiscano. Ma spetta agli uomini assennati il farne quel ca  
so che conviene, così per non inquietarsi del danno, che ne torni alla propria fama,  
come per non farne argomento da giudicare dei fatti altrui.

Vero è, che non posso sbrigarmela così facilmente quando ci incolpi di *vili ed  
assurde calunnie, che andiamo seminando* se non dal pulpito, a voce bassa ne' croc  
chi contro l'Ab. Aporti, od altri che ci paia. Certo nè tu vuoi citare chi abbia udito  
siffatte calunnie dalla bocca d'alcun Gesuita, nè in alcun modo gioverebbe alla inno  
cente generazione di que'putti, che noi intentassimo a te loro patrono, e nostro accu  
satore una lite scandalosa d'onde la falsità dell'accusa non risultasse senza infamia d  
alcuno. Resta dunque solo che tutta Italia, e tutto il mondo de' tuoi lettori, dimentichi  
ogni legge di giustizia per credere senz'altra prova, fuorchè il tuo dire, che noi sia  
mo, quali ci descrivi.

Ma non so credere, che tu confidi molto sopra questa sorta d'ingiusto trionfo.

— Ogni buon giudice deplorerà la passione, che in una causa sì grave ti ispirò  
un linguaggio che il tuo onore non ti consentiva. E tu stesso, quando pure non ces  
sasti di riputarci colpevoli di quelle vili ed assurde calunnie, arrossirai d'aver dato  
mano contro di noi a tale imputazione, la quale non potuta provare, lascia ricadere  
sopra di te la macchia, onde pretendevi suggellarci.

Lasciamo di grazia ai vili, e ai disperati l'arma de' calunniosi sospetti, le de  
nunzie impossibili a discutersi con onore, e con evidenza di prove.

Io amo troppo meglio di solo ripetere le sensate parole dell'egregio Sig. Cantù  
così atte ad ispirare e ai detrattori delle Scuole Infantili, e ai loro promotori una sa  
via moderazione. — « Non è da dissimulare, dic'egli, che in troppe di queste relazio  
ni si scambiano per prodigi dei fatti, che sono tutti ordinari, magnificandosi picco  
le cose come stragrandi. — Pietosi abbellimenti, perdonabili al desiderio di ch  
vorrebbe, che a tante istituzioni non venisse meno quel favore, che dà anima. »  
( *Cantù — Cronaca Gazz. di Milano 1843 n.º 57* ).

Così s'intende pel canto opposto; non è da dissimulare, che le pie esagera  
zioni degli amici dell'infanzia, possono provocare gli amici dell'antico buon sen  
so a metter in dubbio per sin i frutti migliori d'un'istituzione novella. — Ma i po  
veri Gesuiti, sono innocentissimi di ciò, che si dica o si faccia da codeste parti  
estreme.

Ben è vero, che alcuni nostri, i quali hanno ufficio di Revisori de'libri, altri per  
*Pellico.*

Non potè per avventura tal opuscolo, tal breve catechismo, proposto per uso di quelle, abbisognare di qualche maggior esattezza o nelle espressioni, o nel compimento della dottrina? e censurarsi il libro, o quelle poche righe, senza pregiudizio del sistema d'istituzione infantile? O se in altra circostanza avrebbero voluto temperare o primere qualche frase di elogio, che lor paresse uscire de' termini della moderazione, sappi che per dar luogo al sano giudizio del pubblico essi avrebbero ugualmente osato surato in altri scritti qualunque cenno di immoderato biasimo.

Se non che il censore non è pur da riguardarsi qual giudice libero, il quale pronunzii giusta la propria opinione; nè egli è per questa sindacabile, se non quando pronunzii contro i principj fino allora professati dall'Autorità, la quale gli aveva affidato la censura. Nè finalmente in alcun caso il giudizio privato, od arbitrario di due o tre censori esprimerebbe in cose estranee alla Compagnia il giudizio di lei.

Non sia però ch'io voglia coprir di mistero il comun nostro opinare intorno questa novella maniera di scuole. — Mi pare che a formarne il più diritto giudizio ogni Gesuita proceda in quel modo, che devi aver seguito tu stesso, ed è in queste materie la regola costante d'ogni uom ragionevole.

La bontà, l'utilità delle Scuole Infantili dee giudicarsi parte dai principj astratti, che determinano il loro scopo e i loro metodi, parte dall'esperienza, che siane fatta in diverse circostanze.

Ma questo giudizio giungerà difficilmente oltre i limiti del probabile; onde qualsiasi parte inclini, o in favore di esse Scuole, o a volerle dannare, non sarà *absque formidine errandi*.

Perciò quanto devo rispettare l'altrui giudizio probabile, che può oppormi, altrettanto devo andar lento a deporre il mio finchè mi resta a temere probabile illusione dalla parte opposta. — Perciò non devo rifuggire le discussioni, che possono recare maggior luce sopra qualsiasi aspetto particolare della materia controversa. — Perciò, supposto ch'io avessi preconcepito un'opinione più favorevole ad un sistema di educazione, che non a questo delle Scuole Infantili, non devo oppormi a quelle parziali esperienze, che uomini sinceri e generosi vogliano fare della più saggia istituzione, quando vi rechino le cautele richieste ad assicurarne il buon frutto. Ma perciò ancora, dovendo, in una questione difficile a risolversi per argomenti propri, tenere saldo alla mano un criterio superiore e comune ad ogni questione filosofica, io andrò regolando il mio giudizio intorno alle Scuole Infantili, conformemente a ciò che i Pastori della Chiesa le vadano adottando.

Là dove i Vescovi accolgono e benedicono siffatte Scuole, il Gesuita, al pari d'ogni fedele Cattolico, ha sufficiente argomento da credere, che o l'intrinseco principio di esse, o le modificazioni imposte ai loro metodi guarentiscono quanto è desiderato per ottenersi un felice risultamento a pro della crescente generazione. E là all'opposto si può temere che altri voglia sottrarre dagli occhi, e dalle cure del Pastore quella porzione del suo gregge, per quanto vantaggio ei ne prometta nell'ordine delle famiglie o dello Stato, una siffatta diffidenza o gelosia non sarà pegno d'alcun vero bene. — La sola carità Cattolica riordinando, per mezzo del Pastore, gli individui, e le loro disposizioni a Dio, riversa dal seno di lui sopra la terra ogni principio di sapienza, di prosperità, *omne datum optimum, et omne donum perfectum*. — E quando si tratta di una questione, che verte tuttavia così fra i politici, come fra i cherici intorno alle Scuole d'Infanzia, non fosse di quelle, intorno a cui dee lasciarsi ad ognuno libera l'opinione, certo sempre la carità, come essenziale principio di cosiffatte istituzioni, potrà sola conciliare ai loro favoreggiatori e la confidenza del pubblico, e la gratitudine della posterità. *In dubiis libertas, in omnibus charitas*.



Ho fin qui procacciato di darti soddisfazione intorno a que' pochi fatti principali di recente data, che ti hanno provocato a ripudiare ogni speranza, che prima avessi di veder i Gesuiti rivolti al bene.

Testimonio di quanto avvenne, e fu detto e scritto, e intorno al ricovero de' Mendici di Torino, e intorno alle Strade, ai *Vapori*, e al Feudalismo in Sardegna, e intorno alle Scuole Infantili, che dicesti da noi condannate in Genova, e altrove, io ti ho mostrato con quella franchezza, che devo e ad un amico, e al pubblico, quanto il tuo sdegno andasse a colpire vane ombre, e fossero ingiuste le maledizioni, che per quelle rovesci sopra gli innocenti.

Fossero anche più vere le colpe, che ci apponi in questi pochi capi — e fra Gesuiti di Piemonte fossero tre o quattro Predicatori caduti ciascuno una volta in così gravi imprudenze, non vedo tuttavia, che quelle ti dessero sufficiente motivo di cancellare ad un tratto, con sì spietata riprovazione di tutta intiera la Compagnia, meriti che ancora ne commendavi, or son due anni, con qualche encomio, e non senza speranza di miglior avvenire.

O sia pure, come tu il dichiarai, che quando descrivevi la Compagnia sì vigorosa ancora di sublimi spiriti e sì illustre per le sue imprese, non fosser queste tue parole un giusto elogio, ma un consiglio indiretto, un dolce incoraggiamento, fondato piuttosto sopra un pio desiderio, che non sopra il fatto — sia pure che que' Gesuiti, cui allora tu commendavi sì eloquentemente da ingelosirne più d'uno de' tuoi amici, li avessi tuttavia fin d'allora per sì da poco, e sì presso all'estrema misura de' falli da tollerarsene, che due o tre imprudenze ancora, dovessero farti mutare *ex abrupto* il linguaggio della bontà, in quello d'un'ira implacabile — sia pur giusto il pretendere che l'emendazione di una sì grande Compagnia d'uomini profondamente depravati, si mostrasse compita per ogni verso nel giro di due anni — di questa tua giustizia non posso giudicare, poichè involto fra i rei, non ci ho nè diritto, nè sufficiente imparzialità.

Che resta tuttavia di un giudizio sì grave e sì solenne, poichè i fatti, che ne erano la base, ti erano stati esposti sì diversi dal vero?

Può certo restarti la lode della santa intenzione, e della buona fede — ma la sentenza, spero, l'avremo per nulla.

Avremo pertanto riacquistato il diritto alla tua pazienza; potrai ancora *tollerare* alcun poco que' vizii di prima, i quali, per quanto or te ne mostri commosso, ti permettevano però di sospendere la tua collera, e di lusingarci con parole amiche.

E intanto, che a mantenere l'assunto ufficio di Giudice tu attenda più dappresso ad osservarci, e a raccogliere informazioni più esatte, noi ci metteremo in grado di dissipare sì bene ogni antica imputazione, che tu non abbi più a condannare nelle cose nostre altro torto, fuorchè dei nostri calunniatori, e di chi ciecamente ripete le loro calunnie.

Così almeno io mi fo lecito di argomentare dal peso immenso, che desti nella condanna di tutta la Compagnia ai pochi fatti raccolti intorno ai Gesuiti di Piemonte. — La supposta realtà di que' fatti potea tanto a dimostrarti come tutti insieme i Gesuiti del mondo proseguissero a camminare nelle perverse loro vie? — La falsità o l'innocenza di que' fatti varrà dunque a risuscitare quel po' di buon concetto, che di tutti i Gesuiti volevi dianzi mantenere.

quelli, di cui potessi io darmi per così intimo testimonio. — Ma sono impaziente dar mano ad una questione, dove si tratta per me non solo di vendicare l'innocenza de' miei fratelli, ma di sgombrare dalla mente di un amico immagini troppo nefaste.

Io deploro con te gli innocenti caduti sul campo. — Ai colpevoli, che vi causarono la morte, vorrei aver salvata la vita a costo della mia propria. — Nè sarà che per respingere una calunnia, per quanto sia pur atroce, io mi permetta o d'intorbidare al dolore di chi piange i cari perduti, o allo sdegno, che un pio senso d'umanità suscita in petto.

Ma perchè di quel tuo sdegno hanno da esser vittima altri innocenti? perchè quel sangue domandi ragione ai Gesuiti?

Che furon essi in questo deplorabile avvenimento, altro che un pretesto, o innocente occasione dell'assalto dato ad una città libera, che li aveva chiamati?

— Così, senza discernere le cause degli avvenimenti, tu accetti la storia l'odi dalle voci d'una fazione infelice?

Cerchi questa un velo, travisi i fatti; a te prima di farti nostro giudice s'atteneva però il distinguere, donde venissero le accuse, e quanto fossero vere. — ci avresti avuto a durare molta fatica.

E chi sa, che quando ti giungeranno queste mie parole, già tu non ti rimprovererai di non aver saputo esser pietoso verso le vittime della guerra civile, senza esser giusto verso di noi?

Certo se hai proseguito a leggere i fogli pubblici, dove si esprimono liberamente le ragioni delle diverse parti, che hanno levato bandiera in Svizzera, già vi da te stesso aver modificato il giudizio, che ti lasciasti sfuggire al primo assalto del sangue versato, e tra le grida delle vittime cadenti, e de' desolati loro congiunti.

I varî cantoni di Svizzera collegati pel patto federale del 1814 son liberi nella propria interna amministrazione. — Quello di Lucerna trattando per mezzo del Sommo Pontefice dell'uso pio da farsi d'alcune rendite ecclesiastiche convenne con la S. Sede di consacrarle al proprio Seminario vescovile pel mantenimento d'alcuni Gesuiti, i quali vi attendessero all'insegnamento teologico, e al sacramento del ministero.

I primi trattati incontrarono per parte de' Gesuiti medesimi non poche difficoltà a cagione del sistema di scuole, che loro era proposto — e ancorchè le parti fossero giunte a concertarsi, e le autorità cantonali di Lucerna avessero sancito il loro decreto, niun Gesuita però era ancora entrato al possesso degli uffizii divisati — essendone fissato il tempo al principio dell'anno corrente 1845.

Ma mentre si conducevano questi particolari negozii del distretto, una questione fondamentale agitava più altri cantoni e si facea comune a tutti.

Il patto federale concentrava gli affari comuni e di sovrana attribuzione alla dieta, la cui sede passava successivamente alle tre città di Berna, di Lucerna e di Zurigo. Ora varî interessi più o men superiori alle invidie locali aveano suscitato la questione della riforma radicale del patto.

Nell'idea della riforma dominava quella d'una sede ferma in Berna sola, più s'insinuava quella d'una modificazione da recarsi ne' limiti della libertà cantonale, cosicchè i Bernesi i quali concentravano per quel sistema tutto il governo della pubblica tra le lor mani erano i naturali patrocinatori dell'abolizione dell'ordinamento attuale, nè trovavano spontanea simpatia fuorchè presso quegli altri cantoni dove prevaleva qualche antica gelosia contro Lucerna, o contro Zurigo, ovvero presso

mettersi giù, quando occorra, con l'uso della forza. — Ciò non toglie che il sistema d'un governo più uniforme in tutti i cantoni potesse avere qualche attrattiva agli occhi di molti uomini senza macchia e senza interesse; ma non sono i politici speculativi, quelli che corrano con più impeto.

I campioni più ardenti della riforma erano i così detti *corpi-franchi*, fra i quali s'erano insinuati uomini disposti a vendere per questo fine, non che l'opera, ma la coscienza. Aggiungi ora i facoltosi aristocratici, che aveano e mezzi e interesse a sostenere siffatta milizia, bisognosa di comperarsi ad ogni prezzo e sede e pane. — Aggiungi di più l'antagonismo religioso tra protestanti e cattolici, risuscitatosi per ciò solo che questi stavano per l'insito principio di fedeltà devoti all'antico patto — avrai tutti gli elementi di quella deplorabile fazione che venne ad assalire Lucerna sotto pretesto de' Gesuiti.

I Gesuiti infatti non furon qui che un nome tolto ad esprimere come già tante volte altrove, la parte sostenitrice de' diritti, voluta rendere odiosa per quelle tinte infamanti, di cui la Compagnia suol colorirsi agli occhi d'una licenza sfrenata — d'ipocrisia cioè e d'egoismo.

Accusare Lucerna d'aver decretato una stanza a pochi Gesuiti, valeva nella bocca degli assalitori, quanto accusarla di esser tenace della libertà cantonale e del patto comune.

Ma, diceano essi, quella tenacità essere radicata nel principio suo cattolico, epperò da odiarsi da ogni buon protestante; quella tenacità essere un egoismo a danno de' cantoni suoi emuli, epperò da odiarsi da tutti; quella tenacità non avere la libertà patria per oggetto, ma essere un'ipocrisia, sotto il cui velo Lucerna mirava per avventura a tradire la repubblica.

Ecco a che valeva il nome de' Gesuiti in questa gara politica. — E che di fatti cotesti religiosi non fossero qui nè complici, nè vero oggetto della questione, non si rese egli evidente per le dichiarazioni di tutte le parti, che furono spettatrici imparziali della lotta? E che questo non fosse che il grido di guerra contro l'ordine stabilito, non si vide chiaro nella rivolta di Losanna, paese Calvinista, ove i faziosi gridavano — *A terra i Gesuiti!* I Gesuiti a Losanna!! — Quanti fogli d'ogni opinione diversa, così di Svizzera, come di Francia, non sono concordi nell'attestare questa verità? E non si sono rivolti i nemici di Lucerna, e dell'antica libertà ad offendere troppe altre persone ed altri diritti, per niente implicati cogli interessi de' Gesuiti?

O Ginevra sì protestante, o Zurigo sì illuminata, od altri cantoni non meno di questi gelosi d'indipendenza, hanno trattato mai la questione altrimenti, che come se tutta stesse nel salvare l'autorità cantonale dalle imprese della fazione *unitaria*? — O quando si pregava ancora il consiglio Lucernese di ritrattare il decreto fatto in favore de' Gesuiti, dove apparì mai, che questi fossero altro fuorchè uno spauracchio da mettersi fuori di questione, se sol si poteva con decoro della libertà di chi li aveva domandati? — Niuno potè seriamente figurarsi che due o tre religiosi, non mai penetrati in quel nuovo stabilimento, in cui non era loro assicurato più che il meschino sostentamento che loro basta altrove, fossero essi gli interessati, gli ostinati ad effettuare sì importante conquista a pro della Compagnia. — Per quanto appartenga al suo apostolato il rendersi utile ai cattolici, e lo stendere le conquiste della Chiesa fra i protestanti, niuno però fra i politici alquanto spassionati potè attribuire alla Compagnia nè le prime mosse del suo trattare con le autorità di Lucerna, nè la menoma avidità di correre a quel posto, nè la più leggera partecipazione alle pubbliche gare per ottenere che i suoi amici le aprissero il passo a mano armata.

Tu presumi di troncare tutta la questione in due parole, pronunziando, che



grimevole essi non da essere i pagatori.

Ma, Gioberti, pensa prima, che Lucerna, e Roma, e i Gesuiti di Friburgo pur tutti del pari sul proprio terreno della questione. Roma aveva il suo Nunzio in Svizzera, nè poteva esser tradita dall'ingordigia de' Gesuiti o dalle esagerazioni degli esaltati. — Lucerna era la prima a vedersi esposta a qual che si fosse reazione. Eppure stimava dover troppo più paventare il progresso delle ree dottrine, contro le quali supplicava che la Compagnia facesse argine con buoni Teologi e Missionarii. — I Gesuiti, così si scriveva di là alla santa Sede, mandano tuttodì scelti soggetti alle missioni, in Affrica, in America; or dov'è la giustizia o la pietà, se rifiutano i pochi individui, che loro domanda un popol Cattolico, il quale trema di vedersi tra poco preda all'eresia, ed all'incredulità?

E la Compagnia dal canto suo, che interesse aveva mai a compromettere il proprio onore presso la santa Sede, ad un tempo, e presso la Repubblica col compromettere la cosa a precipizio? Se dovunque essa si stabilisce non cerca altro fuorchè un campo da faticare e il poco necessario a modesti religiosi, qui la povertà e la fame eran pur veramente assicurate, ma niuno crederà, che quelle sianno attrattive da cecarci.

Qui dunque convennero a trattare uomini pratici delle circostanze — qui trovarono contraenti liberi, onorati, di buona fede — qui tutti volean del pari procedere con onore e sicurezza — qui si procedette con una lentezza somma, — nè è da dimenticare, che cagione di tanta lentezza fu la Compagnia medesima. Quanto potesse esigere di umana prudenza, tutto dunque intervenne a sancire il decreto Lucerno. Ed era poi da farlo ritrattare? Come potevamo noi recedere, mentre Lucerna dal canto suo non consentiva? — E di fatto tutti d'accordo i poteri di quel Cantone scrissero a Roma per antivenire ogni timore delle conseguenze che si minacciassero al nostro ingresso. Se una fazione, scrivono essi, si sdegna al vedere i Gesuiti entrare nel possesso di questo nuovo Stabilimento, il lasciarci intimorire da' suoi sdegni sarà renderla vieppiù audace — ed immolare a vana paura un decreto ed un diritto, nelle presenti circostanze vale quanto tutta la libertà Cantonale, e tutta intiera la causa del Patto sopra cui riposa la pace della Repubblica. — Da qual canto adunque potrà esser la colpa se fummo chiamati, voluti, nè lasciati liberi di ritirarci dagli obblighi impostici così da Roma, come da Lucerna? Il sangue versato dappoi in odio dei Gesuiti, e dell'antica libertà Elvetica proverà egli al mondo, che i Gesuiti odiano la libertà, e vogliono il sangue?

Si del sangue suo proprio fu pur larga la Compagnia ogni volta, che le occorre per Dio e per l'umanità. — Del suo sangue è bagnata l'Inghilterra, nè è sanguinoso il suolo di vittime impotenti, ma tutto di generosi eroi, i quali d'anno in anno per lunghe generazioni succedentisi, affrontavano le torture e la morte per solo sostenere in quell'isola le rovine della Chiesa Cattolica — Del sangue dei Gesuiti sono inaffiate le spiagge d'America, nè già per essersi associati all'ingordigia, ma per la carità, che li spingeva a conquistare que' popoli infelici all'onestà, alla fede, e al Cielo. — E se di sangue fu per la Compagnia il Giappone, e quanto ve n'ebbe a versare del proprio tanto conta fra i pegni della gloria, cui le sarà dato di partecipare con altri signi Ordini, allorchè la semenza della fede ivi ripigli a fiorire. — Anche il Continente d'Europa fu in vari tempi bagnato di sangue di Gesuiti; versato ora per la fede, ora per la carità de' prossimi, ora a soddisfazione di ipocriti sdegni, ora per furore d'un volgo traviato.

Nè a dare le vite de' suoi più cari la Compagnia aspettò pure o gli assalti della violenza, o nuovi regni da conquistare alla fede. L'Italia sola noverì quante volte

Quello sì, mio caro, è il solo sangue che la Compagnia sappia mai versare — il solo suo proprio — e per cause tutte sante — o certo sempre col merito dell'innocenza. — Che se là pure dove le avveniva di combattere per la fede, altre nobilissime vittime furono immolate sopra i cadaveri de' suoi Martiri, vorrai tu incolparla quasi per lei si fosse acceso il fuoco della persecuzione, o delle discordie civili? — O fu dunque sì reo S. Paolo, perchè ora gli Ebrei, ora i Gentili metteano in rivolta le città intiere, a cacciare il banditore d' una dottrina odiata?

Oh vedi anzi se la presenza e la dottrina de' Gesuiti, non sia agli uomini inclinata al sangue, il primo e più odiato argine, ch' essi soghiano tentare di abbattere!

Certo non dirai che quell' argine sia odiato e voluto abbattere da' soli ingenui amatori di libertà.

Dov' era meglio congiunta la libertà col buon diritto, se non nella causa di Lucerna? Non l' ha dichiarato l' Europa tutta?

Ora quel popolo che sente sì nobilmente di sè e de' diritti comuni, e del proprio dovere, quel popolo libero è pur quel desso che stringe in uno la propria causa con quella de' Gesuiti — e i nemici de' Gesuiti sono pure i sovvertitori del patto federale, — e pugnano per un sistema, il quale minaccia ogni Cantone, e la Repubblica intera di cader preda d' una potente fazione o d' una guerra civile — e assalgono a tradimento una città libera e fedele — e giungono fino ad ispirare l' assassinio! — E tu immolerai a costoro la Compagnia, come dovuta al loro santo zelo per la patria libertà?

Di' che la libertà anch' essa ha i suoi confini; di' che non è libertà se non salvati i diritti; allora dirai bene. — Ma avrai pronunziato l' apologia de' Gesuiti, non meno che de' Lucernesi.

E donde ti argomentavi di doversi sterminare da ogni stato i Gesuiti perchè infausta cagione di discordie o di oppressione, mi concederai di conchiudere, che fedeli alleati d' ogni buon diritto vigente i Gesuiti sono perciò così cari ai sinceri e generosi repubblicani dell' Elvezia, come poteron mai essere ai monarchi.

Cercheremo altrove come la Compagnia di Gesù concilii i doveri in apparenza sì diversi di devozione ai Principi, e di zelo per le leggi di libertà. — Qui basti l' apparenza vera mostrata innocente del sangue versato per la difesa di un governo libero in una circostanza dove il nome di lei non fu tolto dagli assalitori, che come un pretesto.

### VERO STATO DELLA QUESTIONE.

Io son lungi tuttavia dal vantarmi pel fin qui detto d' avere terminata la causa della tua mossa contro la Compagnia di Gesù.

Coll' esporre nel vero loro aspetto que' pochi fatti recenti di Piemonte o di Svizzera, donde hai tolto occasione di tante altre accuse, io ho sol dimostrato, che non eravamo peggiorati da quel grado di bontà in che ci stimavi prima d' ora.

Ma con ciò non cade punto a terra l' immagine sì brutta ed odiosa, che a cagione di que' pochi fatti prendi a dipingere degli intimi vizî di questa nostra Società. — Perchè tu mi diresti, che non procedi da' falli commessi ultimamente ad arguirli per via di induzione quanto siamo profondamente perversi, cosicchè negati que' falli, rovinati tutto l' argomento, ma che ingannato o no dall' apparenza del nostro operare in questi ultimi anni, lo sdegno ti mosse a scoprire que' troppi vizî inveterati nel nostro Istituto, e da te voluti fin qui benignamente dissimulare.

Ed io accetto la posizione, che mi stabilisci per sostenere i tuoi assalti.

Anche questi pretesi vizî inveterati, per non aver meritato indulgenza, debbono

ti, danno pure negli occhi e ispirano eccessivo ribrezzo e spavento; io che da anni vivo in mezzo ai Gesuiti devo ben anche aver veduto di tanto disordine qualche indizio, e averne sperimentato nella coscienza quel ribrezzo, quello sdegno che è naturale a prodursi dalla vista d'una religione volta in ipocrisia.

Ripiglio dunque intorno alla presente questione la mia qualità di legittimo testimonio.

— Perchè se a valermi di questa qualità si esige che io abbia veduto, o udito, trattato le cose della Compagnia, il mio grado appunto e i miei ufficii mi hanno posto nella necessità di conoscerle, e di maneggiarle, e di penetrarvi più addentro e di molti altri. — Se si esigono sane facoltà di senso e di mente da percepire cose nel loro naturale aspetto, così in ordine alla realtà di fatto, come in ordine alla moralità, tutta la mia vita, la Dio mercè, è nota a te, ed a' nostri comuni amici si dimostra tuttora lontana così da ogni esaltazione e stranezza di giudizio, come da ogni morale o fisico sconcerto. — Se poi si esige, che io guarentisca la mia sincerità, col mostrare, che non ho interesse alcuno a mentire, le circostanze tutte concorrono a persuaderti, che il mentire sarebbe anzi evidente mio danno.

La mia condizione di Gesuita non è punto o sì agiata, o sì onorevole, che possa indurmi ad amarla, e a volervi perseverare per alcuno di quegli interessi, quali altri suole tradire la verità.

Quando so, che al solo levarmi a parlare di lei, mi traggo addosso il disprezzo e gli improprii di coloro che si fanno gli arbitri della pubblica opinione — quando non ho pure la speranza, che la mia voce valga a trattenere un momento l'impeto, che minaccia l'onore o la pace della Compagnia — quando per questo mio scritto io esco dal silenzio dove potea giacermi ignorato, e mi espongo non solo ai dardi del nemico ma a perder forse il segreto favore di qualche amico abbastanza benevolo per supporre complice degli altri Gesuiti — in questo concorso, dico, di circostanze sì contrarie ai miei personali interessi, certo non da sospetto di esser un uomo ambizioso, un uomo che per amor proprio sia mosso a mentire.

Oppure che cosa avrei io a temere dalla Compagnia, se avvilita, come pare, sarà ogni dì più, io mi separassi dal suo seno, per far eco ai potenti suoi accusatori confermando col linguaggio di chi esce dall'oppressione, la verità delle laidezze che sono apposte? O il peso dell'infamia, ch'io divido con lei, il solo dubbio, che tante e sì gravi accuse mosse contro di lei mi possono aver ispirato intorno alla verità della sua causa, non dovrebbero aver risuscitato in me que'sensi naturali di pietà e di prudenza, che insegnano anche allo scellerato a separarsi dai suoi complici e a prevenire i rigori della giustizia?

Comunque però i titoli, ch'io reco di legittimo testimonio delle cose della Compagnia di Gesù, possano non essere ammessi da chi non vuol ritrattare l'antico giudizio, per cui l'ha dannata, io non posso negare alla verità, e al mio onore il diritto, che la coscienza m'impone, di far uso della notizia, che ho di quest'istituto per respingere le calunnie, ond'è assalito.

A te lascio l'ufficio di giudice, che assumesti; la tua coscienza sola stabilisca le norme, che vuoi seguire per non farti oppressore della verità, e dell'innocenza. — Io starò ne' limiti del mio modesto assunto. Non supplico, non peroro, non mi armo di mezzi oratorii. — Parlo da semplice testimonio — e ove tu neghi di darmi retta, non potrò tuttavia consolarmi d'aver avuto perciò stesso, onde riconoscere viemmeglio qual parte sia la buona coscienza, l'onore, la rettitudine.

Volendo tuttavia parlare di cose di fatto e appartenenti alla Compagnia di Gesù, permettimi qui di determinare con precisione l'oggetto, sopra il quale noi contendiamo.

Altro è per avventura la Compagnia di Gesù, ed altro quel Gesuitismo astratto o anche quel corpo informe di Setta Gesuitica, che tu estendi senza limite, e ve presente in ogni luogo.

« Quando si parla del Gesuitismo, tu affermi (*Proleg. p. 107*), non si dee solamente intendere la Compagnia, ma eziandio la sua clientela numerosissima, composta non pur d'individui spicciolati, ma di congreghe secolari e subalterne che ricevono l'impulso loro dal corpo principale, e ne fanno penetrare gli spiriti per ogni dove. » — Quindi sebbene *discorrendo di Gesuitismo e di fazione Gesuitica* tu non intendi *di ascrivere tutte le sue colpe ai soci dell'ordine*, tuttavia in *quant* *le prime mosse procedono da questi*, tu fai la Compagnia pagatrice per gli effetti consecutivi, e giustifichi, e prendi a seguire l'uso invalso di battezzare col nome di lei la setta universale.

Per questa descrizione del Gesuitismo intendesti adunque un tutto organizzato per vincolo di comun reggimento e diretto da comuni principî a un fine comune.

Ma i confini estremi di questo tutto rimangono sì indeterminati, che scor agevolmente a confonderlo con altro, ch'esso non è.

Io scorgo bensì distintamente la Compagnia di Gesù, composta de' suoi religiosi, e costituita dalle Bolle apostoliche in ispeciale e distinta forma di governo domestico.

Fuori poi della Compagnia, alcune sue Congregazioni secolari, in cui si raccolgono dai varî ceti della società civile quelle persone, che intendono di trovarvi il doppio vantaggio della direzione e dell'emulazione in ogni esercizio di virtù cristiana.

Più oltre poi a questi due cerchi se scorgi uomini amici della Compagnia, sinceri, o no — interessati, o fanatici — semplici devoti, od esagerati zelatori — questi non apparterranno più al Gesuitismo come membra d'un medesimo corpo organico, ma per sola relazione estrinseca, e per una qualsiasi conformità di principî, di modi, di linguaggio, di condotta.

Ma finalmente questi medesimi amici, che si collegano per qualsiasi interesse privato o comune con la Compagnia di Gesù, e formano una naturale appendice, sequela delle sue Congregazioni, appartengono pur eziandio per molti vincoli sociali e per somiglianza di principî a tutto il rimanente della repubblica. E se per essere tu i così detti affigliati della Compagnia, uomini mediocri, interessati o indiscreti, tu cogli questo carattere per loro distintivo, e stendi la figliazione, e la setta Gesuitica fin dove scorgi nella società cristiana *ignoranza, ipocrisia, fanatismo*, odio de' lumi, avversione a tutto ciò che è nuovo e generoso, e fino ad abbracciare quell'estremo grado di illusione, o di empietà, che corre senza ritegno a *mezzi colpevoli per fini buoni e santi* — tu esci affatto dalle condizioni d'un'ipotesi ragionevole.

Di più tu avverti, che le anzidette congregazioni, ancorchè più intimamente strette alla Compagnia, in molte cose tuttavia si governano da sè medesime — e riconosci che se alcun membro di quelle, o l'intero consiglio d'alcuna di esse si spinge ad atti riprovevoli, questi non sono da imputarsi alla Compagnia se non in quanto da lei ricevano le prime mosse.

Ora ciò viene a dire, che altri può essere ignorante, ipocrito, fanatico, e non appartenere per niente al consorzio Gesuitico. — Anzi a dir più vero, siffatta generalizzazione d'uomini essendo per indole sua propria meno fedele a procedere dirittamente secondo la buona logica, o secondo coscienza, sarà tanto meno da imputarsi alla Compagnia la loro condotta, o il lor ragionare, quanto opereranno e parleranno

fra i suoi fautori, ma che le loro operazioni procedono dai principî, ch' essa insegna ed infonde.

Lo stesso è a dirsi degli atti e de' discorsi de' membri religiosi dell' ordine, quello più stretti per comune professione di regole. — Chè ove tu notasti fra loro un uomo men retto nel suo procedere, meno savio e filantropo nel suo sentire, meno amabile al tuo giudizio, non potresti argomentare, che alcun suo difetto torni a vantaggio delle sue regole, e de' suoi maestri, e sia necessariamente comune ed imputabile ai suoi fratelli, se non in quanto i principî e le mosse, che tutti ricevono, inchinano naturalmente tali conseguenze in pratica.

Onde sia pure il tuo Gesuitismo quel miserabile fantoccio, che vuoi per divertimento; se però mi concedi di prendere sul serio il vitupero, che vuoi ne ridondi alla Compagnia di Gesù, io dichiaro qui di voler separare la causa di lei da quella di qualsiasi pretesa sua figliazione, e ridurla a' confini dell' essere suo proprio ed individuale.

Il che basterà altresì a tua soddisfazione se ricerchi in buona fede il vero stato della Compagnia, come ordine osservante o no del suo istituto, epperò da mantenere a servizio della Chiesa e dello Stato, o da doversi sbandire, e sterminare.

Perchè se limitandoci a considerare quest' ordine religioso ne' suoi termini naturali, ci risulta, che esso è tuttora quale la Chiesa lo costituì, risulterà altresì, che le sue influenze intorno a sè, così sopra le Congregazioni a lei affidate, come sulla rimanente della società umana, corrisponderanno senza fallo ai voti della Chiesa medesima.

Laddove quella informe larva del Gesuitismo, — quella setta composta di elementi eterogenei ed insociabili — quella fazione senza principî di dottrina, o di scienza — quell' ipotesi che collega in società di opere e di interessi tutti gli spiriti mal fatti, o più ribelli a disciplina — quelle tinte che permettono di confondere in un mostruoso consorzio una Religione con quanto v' ha ad esso di più straniero, e di qualificare per Gesuita un uomo pel solo essere egli uomo mediocre, o degradato — son tutte cose, che paion piuttosto trovate a bello studio per imbrogliar la questione anzichè per definirne a dovere l' oggetto.

Se la Compagnia di Gesù composta qual' è dei religiosi, che vi professano una regola comune, si dimostra o discorde dalla chiesa nelle sue regole proprie, od infedele servatrice d' un istituto santo, o maestra di rea dottrina, o dissenziente ne' fatti da quella che insegna — potremo involgerla nella medesima dannazione di tutti gli ipocriti, di tutti i falsi dottori che sono al mondo, — e tu avrai vinta la tua causa. —

Altrimenti, lasciata da parte al giudizio di Dio tutta quella turba di gente buona o rea che malamente battezzavi col nome di setta Gesuitica, — tu dovrai benedirli con me quella Compagnia eletta, la quale ad onta delle più nere prevenzioni, che si fanno nel mondo a danno di lei, non cessa di proseguire con generosa fermezza la sua opera dell' Uomo-Dio, di cui porta il Nome.

### CONGREGAZIONI.

Non sia però, che per voler limitare la causa presente alla sola Compagnia di Gesù, in quanto essa costituisce un corpo da sè, io abbandoni senza riguardo le altre Congregazioni agli insulti di chi intende far oltraggio a noi.

A commendartele adunque ricorderò almeno, che nate e cresciute sotto l' incessante tutela de' Sommi Pontefici esse vantano gli speciali favori ricevuti da Gregorio XIII, da Sisto V, da Clemente VIII; e per citare anche solo quello, che le con-



ti molteplici si raccolgono a pro d' ogni ordine di persone con l' educazione de' co-  
giovanili, con la riforma de' costumi, e con l' emulazione delle buone opere. ( *Bull.*  
*Aurea Bened. XIV. Gloriosae Dominae*, 27 Sept. 1748 ).

Ma vuoi una testimonianza più recente ? Quali erano le Congregazioni al Co-  
gio Romano sotto la direzione de' Gesuiti, tali dopo la soppressione della Compagnia  
furon adottate e governate da chi lor succedette — e quando papa Leone XII resti-  
il Collegio Romano alla Compagnia, e con esso la Congregazione, che diremmo c-  
trale e matrice ivi fondata, si piacque di dichiarare, che ciò fosse non solo con t-  
i diritti e i privilegi, con cui il Padre Generale la governava anticamente, e coll'  
gregarvi tutte le Congregazioni altrove esistenti della Compagnia — ma ancora  
potervisi aggregare qualunque altra intitolata dalla Beata Vergine, in qualun-  
Chiesa od Oratorio si trovi eretta ( *Rescript. Leon. P. XII.* 7 Mart. 1825 ).

Il che ai tuoi occhi e agli occhi d' ogni politico importa, se non altro, che  
concetto voluto fin qui inculcare dagli avversarii della Compagnia intorno alle C-  
gregazioni, per cui si rappresentano come una milizia ch' essa dirige a fini tempor-  
è affatto gratuito e lontano dal vero.

— Vedi che molte Congregazioni associate alla nostra Romana, son pur gov-  
nate, non da noi ma dai parrochi o da altri sacerdoti secolari — vedi, che il l-  
istituto è tutto ordinato a soli fini spirituali — vedi che la S. Sede anzichè teme  
che noi abusiamo di tanta clientela, ce l' amplifica oltre a quanto potrebbe da noi  
larsi.

Dopo ciò non occorre ch' io aggiunga, che ciascuna Congregazione veglia  
escludere dal suo seno gli uomini turbolenti, e di niun valore. A ciò se non la d-  
gessero i suoi positivi statuti, la consiglierebbe anche il solo naturale istinto della p-  
pria conservazione e del proprio decoro.

Bensì ogni Congregazione formandosi d' un ceto particolare di persone, o pro-  
nendosi per fine proprio un esercizio particolare di virtù — la gloria o l' eccellenza  
de ciascun di que' corpi si commenda non dipende tanto dal lustro personale de' s-  
membri, quanto dal comporsi il suo tutto di membri idonei per rettitudine di giud-  
e bontà di opere, a conseguire a proprio ed altrui vantaggio quello scopo che è int-  
dagli statuti, or nella pubblica professione della fede, o del culto della Madre di D-  
or nella cura de' poveri, e degli ignoranti, or nell' impegno di una condotta esemp-  
re e fervente. — Ai quali fini misurati tutti alla comune condizione de' cristiani che  
tendono nel secolo ai doveri pubblici o privati, non era da ricercarsi più di quel  
che. S. Gregorio Magno chiama *exteriorum scientia*, cioè il discernimento prat-  
di ciò che conviene alla condotta della vita, e al buon progresso delle proprie C-  
gregazioni. — Dono, per altro preziosissimo, e che messo in opera con quella dilig-  
za, che sogliono i fedeli congregati, rende, oltre ad un tesoro di meriti person-  
proporzionato alla frequenza ed alla squisitezza degli atti virtuosi in che si esercita,  
frutto di mutua edificazione nelle famiglie e in tutta la Chiesa, con quel di più di te-  
porale provento, che torna ai poveri e all' intera repubblica, dalle opere di benefic-  
tolte a dirigersi con comune consiglio d' uomini intelligenti e pii.

#### AMICI ILLUSTRI.

Così è da distinguersi l' essere delle Congregazioni da quello della compagnia  
affinchè non si trovino involte nella disgrazia di questa. — Ma ossia in qualità  
congregati, ossia per sola spontanea generosità e simpatia verso di lei, concorrono  
a formarle d' intorno scudo e corona molti illustri amici, i quali pel grado onde t-

Gli avversari de' Gesuiti si rivolgono di rado a ferire direttamente questa vile falange, — essi mostrano volentieri di non vedere attorno alla Compagnia fuorchè uno stuolo di talpe o di gufi, d' uomini nulli, sedotti, o sì perversi da disonorarla, — e sperano che se v'ha fra gli amici di lei qualche anima di sensi onorati, vergogna di vedersi confusa con quell' ignobil turba, sia per ispirarle il savio consiglio di ritirarsi.

Ad ogni modo anche questa, benchè indiretta, è un' ingioria a chi ci ama; benchè io veda con ammirazione e gratitudine quanti generosi si levino in queste nostre tribolazioni per dimostrare, che nè essi sono que' ciechi, onde vuolsi comporre tutta la clientela Gesuitica, nè la Compagnia è indegna dell' amicizia de' grandi uomini, protesterò tuttavia, ch' io qui non voglio abusare del loro favore coll' esporli a maggiori insulti.

Sappia il mondo, che la Compagnia non può non esser grata ai tanti prelati, ai sì valenti oratori, a' dotti, agli uomini distinti d' ogni sfera, i quali con petto sì caldo d'amore, e con ogni vigore d' argomenti han preso a sostenere la causa di lei in faccia a tutta l' Europa. — Sappia pur ancora, che se non iscorge del pari in tutti i paesi tali amici nostri, quali si manifestano in Francia, in Germania, in Inghilterra, la nostra gratitudine non isconosce il suo debito verso coloro, cui riesce tanto più doloroso il forzato silenzio, quanto comprime del pari e la loro generosità, e la nostra innocenza.

Lascèrò tanto meno di pagare, benchè in troppo scarsa misura, un somigliante tributo ai Sommi Pontefici, ed ai Principi, i quali fattisi alla Compagnia non come amici, ma tutori e padri, la circondano di tanto onore, che le è dato di non temere il dirla che altri fa sì tenebrosa ed infame, e nata a trascinarsi nel fango.

Non sia mai tuttavia, che la Compagnia ardisca di confondere la causa de' suoi protettori ed amici con la sua propria, sicchè ricada sopra di loro l' abbiezione, che può toccarle.

Si è voluto dire, che abbiamo un' arte apposta di vincolarci le persone nobili e colte, di sedurle, di corteggiarle, di strapparne i favori, di spingerle innanzi a far strada ai nostri interessi, senza riguardo a non compromettere il loro onore, ma per lusingando il loro onore, e il loro interesse col far valere il nostro fedele servizio e la nostra onnipotenza a loro pro.

Qui dunque domando perdono ai nobili amici della Compagnia, se mi permeta per l' onore di lei, e pel loro proprio, di protestare, che i vincoli che a loro ci legano non sono punto sì stretti.

Se essi ci stimano, se ci amano, se ci proteggono, tutto, dirò, è spontaneo da loro — tutto ispirato da quel discernimento, che guida uomini savii, esperti e generosi — tutto diretto a favorire non i gesuiti, come loro devoti, ma la Compagnia come stromento di comun bene della Chiesa e dello Stato.

E se la Compagnia dal canto suo li ama, e li ossequia, certo rispetta l' altezza in che Dio li ha collocati, nè tuttavia si striscia ai loro piedi, o ne ambisce i favori. — Dio le insegna quanto monta a pro del gregge volgare l' infondere in chi lo guida quella pietà, quello zelo del dovere, quel vigor di virtù, che è l' opera dei ministri di lei. — Dio le insegna, che il favore de' grandi è nato a tutelare la fede, l' innocenza, ogni impresa santa. — Ma per ciò stesso troppo le ripugnerebbe il fare oltraggio alla nobiltà de' loro spiriti, alla causa di Dio, a sè medesima, col discendere dal suo Apostolico uffizio, a mendicare amici per fini umani.

Quanto poi agli ignoranti, a' fanatici, agli ipocriti, i quali comechessia pa-  
aggirarsi intorno a' Gesuiti, e farsene o clienti o fautori, voglio pure, che noi co-  
deriamo un momento se le loro relazioni con la Compagnia tornino di fatto a sì g-  
vitupero di questa, o anzi siano a dirsi così strette, così vere di fatto, come altri a  
di dirle.

Voglio ammettere in prima, per ipotesi, che dove la Compagnia goda di qu-  
che favore nel pubblico, insieme agli uomini retti e pii le si appicchino d' into-  
persone guidate da privati interessi, e certe anime più o meno spregevoli, e mal fa-

Ma non avrai con ragione per ipocriti o spregevoli tutti gli idioti, ed i cristi-  
d' ogni condizione, che sogliono affollarsi in Chiesa o alla porta di casa intorno ai  
stri confessionali; non avrai per clienti, o per fautori comprati dalla Compagnia q-  
poveri, con cui ci avviene di dividere qualche po' di pane. Il disprezzare in massa  
avere per malvagia questa sorta di persone, che pur costituisce la maggior parte  
nostro *corteggio*, sentirebbe troppo del Farisaico, e dell' anticristiano.

La nostra ipotesi adunque dee riferirsi ad individui, i quali, tu consideri in  
tre relazioni di affari, con la Compagnia; la qual supposizione sa del mistero,  
non può stendersi a molti, già è difficile a mettersi in evidenza, sicchè non debba  
sere in gran parte gratuita, o dubbiosa.

Ma ammettiamola — ed io prendo a ragionare così. Non tutti gli spiriti st-  
volti sono da confinarsi o da sanarsi ne' Manicomii. — Non tutte le tempre infelici  
cuore sono da riformarsi nelle carceri penitenziarie. — E quando pure la carità c-  
stiana e la filantropia giungessero co' loro sforzi riuniti a trovar nuove forme d' isti-  
ti più atti ad emendare, a disciplinare, ad *utilizzare*, come si dice, ogni essere m-  
rale di più infimo grado cavandone il migliore costrutto possibile, certo è, che fin c-  
siffatta generazione d' uomini fu lasciata pur troppo libera di seguire i suoi istinti  
e s' egli è vero, che od un istinto suo nativo l' attraesse con singolare fiducia intor-  
alla Compagnia, o che la Compagnia non isdegnasse di prenderne la possibile cur-  
mi pare che questi fatti sarebbero degni di essere alquanto meditati.

Fra gli istinti che legano gli uomini in società, io metto assai più volentieri  
primo grado quelli, che son proprî delle facoltà più nobili della mente e del cuore  
ma quello che nasce dalla debolezza dell' individuo è pur forse il più sentito — que-  
dell' interesse, non si deve escludere — e grazie a questi infimi fra i principî acca-  
appunto, che quella immensa parte del genere umano, la quale sarebbe per natu-  
più povera di elementi di sociabilità, è pur ritenuta, anzi spontaneamente condotta  
collocarsi da sè nell' ordine comune della vita sociale.

Gli uomini mediocri cercano appoggio o direzione o il mezzo di alzarsi — e  
i perversi, l'ipocrita è per suo speciale interesse ispirato a scegliere un centro quals-  
si di società. — Togli i malinconici, gli ipocondriaci, o pochi mostri d' indole selva-  
gia e feroce, coloro, in cui una fantasia sregolata prevale al buon giudizio, anch'e-  
cercano alimento, o sfogo in mezzo al consorzio degli uomini.

Or dove si volgeranno tutti questi infelici più volentieri?

Essi non hanno occhi da guardare molto da lungi. Dovunque loro apparisce  
centro qualsiasi di attività sociale, un qualsiasi splendore di grandezza, di potenza,  
merito, di pietà, di scienza, accorre un nembo di siffatti genii parassiti a cercare q-  
pascolo, che appetisce.

Ve ne accorre nelle anticamere de' grandi, ve ne precipita negli atrii delle A-  
cademie, ne vedi aggirarsi attorno ai seggi sacerdotali — nè altrimenti, che le f-  
falle vagheggiare ognuno la face, che gli splende più dappresso, o svolazzare dall'u-  
all'altra.

Ma ciò spiegherebbe solo in parte il fenomeno, che tu accenni con tanto sd-



ne in tutte le parti del mondo, ossia per quell'apostolica influenza, che la facea rig-  
dare come potente a favorire gli interessi di chiunque si ponesse sotto la sua tut-

Resterebbe però a domandarsi perchè la Compagnia se voleva esser savia  
manteneva alcun senso di pudore, se non avea interesse a fare di questa nume-  
e cieca milizia un terribile stromento di turbolenza in seno agli Stati — perchè  
discacciava da sè sì indegna turba di devoti?

Ed ecco una risposta, che mi par degna del tuo nobile sentire non meno  
della sublime vocazione della Compagnia di Gesù.

Gesù medesimo il ristoratore del genere umano, e della civil società insegnò  
Compagnia a sopportare quella molestia, e quell'apparente disdoro. — Anzi  
Cristo si era dato a bella posta quella grazia di umile semplicità, di povertà, di c-  
affabilissima, che sì superiore qual era ai dotti ed ai potenti, lo rendeano tuttav-  
cessibile, e lo faceano ricercare dal volgo de' peccatori e degli idioti. — Fra que-  
catori e quegli idioti egli non isdegnò di scegliere alcuni da mettere in testa al ge-  
no della novella società. — Ma l'intera turba, ancorchè inutile, ancorchè pier-  
stoltezza, ancorchè ingrata, e pronta a voltarsi contro di lui, gli era nullameno c-  
sima, e per solo tenercela attorno alquanto affezionata, per solo poterla sollevare c-  
sua rozzezza, per solo trattenerne alquanto le inclinazioni dallo scorrere a maggio-  
sordini, consentì non che a tollerare il disprezzo de' superbi, e le calunnie degli invid-  
ma al dolore di vedersi abbandonato nella tribolazione, e a dare per que' vili il san-

Tu accusi la Compagnia di avere fra i suoi devoti uomini ipocriti. Non so c-  
questo giudizio ti appartenga, o sia sì ben fondato, e riguardi molte persone ;  
così fosse ; io ragiono ancora così. — Il loro vizio istesso, è quello, che li cuop-  
che scusa chi non li ravvisi per ciò ch'essi sono — poi non è vizio al mondo,  
escluda un uomo da quella scuola, dove tutto gli sarà stimolo ad emendarsi —  
una certa misura comune d'ipocrisia, che trattiene dall'impudenza, o che induc-  
abbracciare la pietà con un qualche fine secondario di temporale interesse, n-  
molto più rea di quel naturale affetto, che trae il vizioso colpito dalla sventura ad  
vocare il nome di Dio — poi un principio imperfetto, e più o men reo, più o men  
nesto se volge dirittamente al male, trova appunto il suo rimedio se volge l'an-  
alle opere di pietà, e a cercare il consorzio de' buoni — finalmente la taccia d'  
criti è pur facile a darsi a molti devoti, quando tuttavia il loro vero difetto non è  
tro fuorchè l'incostanza, e il difetto di logica, per cui loro avviene di tradire in  
tica, ciò che professano, e vorrebbero sinceramente in quell'ora che sono in Chie-

O intendi tu che veri e consumati ipocriti si legano a noi or come stromenti  
nostri maneggi, ora per conseguire il favor dei potenti?

Va' là, ti dirò, semplice che sei. E finchè la tua innocenza ti fa concepire  
ipocriti per così buoni da aver fiducia nella nostra protezione, o pazienza ad asp-  
re i frutti de' loro servizii presso di noi, non parlar pure mai più nè di mondo, n-  
civiltà, nè di Gesuiti. — Gli ipocriti guardano assai meglio dove spiri l'aura favorev-  
— Gli ipocriti intendono troppo bene, che quanto più si magnifica da certe bocche  
potere de' Gesuiti, tanto è più certa la nostra impotenza — ipocriti sì generosi,  
criti sì fedeli amici, da non abbandonarci in mezzo alle continue ire, cui siamo  
saglio. — No, mio caro, non sono un concetto perdonabile al tuo buon senso.

Sol intanto che la Compagnia non fomenti le arti e le pretensioni degli ipoc-  
da lei conosciuti per tali ; solo che i mali atti di costoro non procedano dalla c-  
zione de' Gesuiti, solo che le dottrine, e i modi della Compagnia spirino evange-  
semplicità, essa è ancora così innocente dell'aver fra i suoi devoti o favoreggia-

invano a sanare quel cuore degradato — ma lo volle tollerare sino al fine — e dell'averlo tollerato non torna a Gesù Cristo, che più bella lode di prudenza e di carità. — Nicodemo potea partecipare di alcun principio d'ipocrisia, anch'egli avrebbe voluto conciliare il culto della verità con l'interesse — ma Gesù non lo ributtò — e dall'estrema debolezza lo trasse a levarsi fra gli eroi della pietà e dell'amicizia.

Tanto meno adunque tornerà a vitupero della Compagnia l'innocente turba dei mediocri, degli ignoranti, e ancora, se vuoi, de' fanatici, ch'essa consente di vedersi attorno. — Son gente, che manca di principî di saviezza, od è inetta, dopo udita una volta, a ritenerli, a trarne fedelmente le conseguenze pratiche. — E chi potrà biasimare la Compagnia se studiosa di farsi tutto a tutti, attende a sminuzzare a costoro il pane della parola celeste, e a vincolarli alle pratiche cristiane? Non è quest'opera onde la Chiesa e la società non cessano di benedire i pietosi discepoli di S. Francesco d'Assisi e di S. Vincenzo de' Paoli? — E non era questa la prediletta opera di quella gran testa d'Ignazio Loiola, sulle cui orme pretendi di richiamarci? — O non è l'ombra del Santuario il naturale asilo di coloro, cui la scarsità d'ingegno o di valore costringe a portare il peso dell'altrui superbia? — Se questa cura degli inetti non è abbastanza liberale, non è pur divina?

Ma lascia almeno, ch'io tenga costoro al pari di que' barbari, che ci inviti apertamente a catechizzare. Non altri sono i bisogni di questo vecchio volgo della colta Europa, dall'indole e da' bisogni di quelle nazioni bambine del nuovo mondo — tanto merita il *Paria* mio concittadino, quanto il Bonzo, o il Mandarino, od il superbo seguace di Fozio. — E se dividendo la nostra sollecitudine a norma de' cenni del comun Pastore, noi seguiamo presso la porzione meno illustre di questa antica cristianità ciò, che buona parte de' nostri fratelli adopera in Asia e nelle Americhe, cessa pure di chiamarci inutili, o pigri, o guidati da vana ambizione a rovesciare la società, o a spegnervi ogni cultura.

Non creder tuttavia, o caro, che i vincoli i quali congiungono in qualsiasi maniera alla Compagnia tutte le anzidette generazioni d'esseri morali più degradati, siano indissolubili, o più stretti ora che mai.

Un tempo fu, quando nello splendore che cingeva la Compagnia, uno stuolo di cultori interessati, o volgari, parve per avventura ingombrarle il passo, e scemare il suo decoro.

Allora, al dire di certi zelatori, fuori della Compagnia, sola nutrice di que' mancati ingegni, e fautrice d'ogni corruttela, tutto, a fronte di lei, pareva splendere per purezza di pietà e di costume.

E allora fu, che una virtù austera collegando ne' medesimi sensi di zelo l'ascetismo e la corte, il foro e l'ateneo consigliò lo sterminio dell'odiosa società Gesuitica.

Ma raro è, che i generosi giungano a sospettare le arti ipocrite de' vili. E certi gli alleati, che militavano francamente contro quella setta d'uomini abbiatti, corrotti, astoti, inetti, ingordi, non prevedero ciò, che dovea pur troppo avvenirne.

Quegli insetti parassiti, che si erano appiccati al grembo della Compagnia, non sì tosto si avvidero del pericolo, che la minacciava, quei quei presero a volarsene l'un dopo l'altro dalla parte, che acquistava credito maggiore.

I filosofi, i potenti, gli uomini più segnalati pel merito di aver tolto a purgar la Religione della peste del Gesuitismo, si trovarono a poco a poco circondati essi pure, e poco men che compromessi, e rovinati da un immenso sciame di impostori e di intriganti, di uomini violenti, i quali disonorarono la loro causa.

Vero è, che il concorso di tante passioni interessate raddoppiò al braccio dei primi assalitori la forza — sicchè la Compagnia, ebbe a cadere sotto i fieri colpi. — Ma quella appunto fu l'ora, in cui la giustizia divina cominciò a vendicare l'innocenza.

e fu compianta.

L'infamia delle arti malvagie, delle mire più basse, de' *mezzi più detestabili a fini riputati buoni o santi*, tutta passò a quella parte, che l'avea dapprima proverata a' Gesuiti. — E i Gesuiti costretti a disperdersi per obbedire al cenn del Sommo Pastore, ricomparvero ancor nell'abbiezione per quegli uomini, che il loro istituto avea formati alla modestia ed alla benignità, non meno che ad ogni valore di virtù e di sapere.

Ma tornerò forse un'altra volta su questo fatto; qui aggiungo solo, che a stabilire la sognata corrispondenza, con che la Compagnia da un canto, dall'altro i suoi clienti fossero a vicenda vincolati, e cooperassero in comune a turpi fini, Dio volle che alla soppressione di lei, i suoi archivi, così di Roma come d'ogni altra principale città, cadessero in potere di quelle autorità, le quali erano più sollecite di preservarsene, o si disperdessero tra le mani di private persone secolari. — Fra tante cose, infatti, fra tante memorie domestiche, fra tanti documenti, relativi ad ogni parte dell'amministrazione di quel gran corpo, non fu pur occhio sì mal disposto contro di noi, che per quanto fosse avido di scoprire la prova d'un nostro fallo, abbia potuto incontrarla. Così ancora nel 1820, quando i Gesuiti vennero espulsi dalla Russia, e così quante altre volte vennero sbanditi in questi ultimi anni, ora dal Portogallo, ora dalla Spagna, ora dalla Francia, or da questa o da quella città d'Italia, furono predate le loro carte, e fra quelle furon trovate le notizie ancor più segrete sopra le virtù osservate ne' nostri religiosi lungo il corso delle lor prove — e che cosa vorremo a pubblicare i nostri nemici in conferma delle nostre cospirazioni cogli affliggimenti onde si vuol supporre, che facciamo stromento a sì malvagie mire?

Se non che a togliere il sospetto di qualsiasi abusare che per noi si faccia delle passioni d'una turba cieca, e devota ai nostri interessi, basta anche solo uno sguardo al presente stato di tribolazione, in cui la Compagnia si trova dopo ripristinata, si sa, che le strane cose, cui il nobile Montlosier s'indusse a dire della sì potente e funesta fazione de' Gesuiti, e de' Preti, e de' *Congreganisti*, quelle trame segrete, quelle invasioni manifeste degli impieghi, degli onori, e dell'autorità a danno del pubblico, son tutte esagerazioni inventate allora, per confessione del *Constitutionnel*, per gabbare i gonzi. Il fatto è, che la Compagnia non ha già tanti amici da temere, essere molti gli indegni, o da comparirne gran fatto più che sola sè, coi suoi nemici naturali.

Bada pertanto, o Gioberti, bada tu stesso a ciò, che sta per accadere intorno a te; e provvedi in tempo a che sia da farsi di quella turba di mediocri, di ignoranti, di ipocriti, di fanatici, la quale, grazie appunto alle gare Anti-Gesuitiche, già si spartendo qua e là incerta del dove trovi più pascolo o sicurezza.

Già noi te l'abbandoniamo pur volentieri, se riesci a trarne partito. — Ma a disperdere al tutto del mondo la razza degli uomini dappoco, poveri d'ingegno, poveri di virtù, poveri di sostanze, non sarebbe impresa da te. Resta dunque, che come avremmo solo bramato, e meglio di quel che sapemmo, tu migliori l'indole dello stato loro. Come vorresti sbandire l'ipocrisia? Se eccettui sola per avventura l'ipocrisia degli scandali, non è condizione di reggimento, non è filosofia, non è religione, che non abbia i suoi ipocriti. — E quando abbi tolti i fanatici all'illusione Giesuistica, non troveranno essi nella politica, nella metafisica, ne' più puri misteri della fede un campo ugualmente libero alla loro fantasia sfrenata? — Ma s'aggiungo, che schiera assai più numerosa de' mediocri e degli inetti; e sarai tu quello, che insegna a mutar natura, o a confessarsi così umilmente per quelli che sono, o a rinunciare ad ogni speranza o vaghezza di onore?

boriosa e privata, ce ne sapevamo ancora noi. Non perder dunque il tempo a ricantare il cielo; fa' che le circostanze sorgano favorevoli alla gran riforma. — Se non prospera il commercio abbastanza da occupare tutte le braccia, se non tutti si dilettono di fabbricare nelle manifatture, o hanno valore da riuscir nelle arti, fa' che risorgano quegli antichi asili aperti all' inferma umanità ne' santi eremi, nelle Badie, nelle Certose, dov' era dato a tanti di nascondere onoratamente, e di emendare una natura meretricia alla vita civile.

Ma se non tutti riusciranno o utili artieri, o abili trafficanti, o prudenti massai, o fedeli osservatori delle leggi — se troppo pochi si piaceranno del ritiro monastico — se tuttavia gemeranno i Pastori della chiesa, di non poter giungere coll' assidua opera loro a prevenire fra quella razza infelice il progresso de' vizi, o gli effetti della disperazione — se gli ordini regolari (come ne sono finora la Dio mercè) i più amici del popolo minuto e rozzo, saran vietati di accomunarsi con tali uomini, che disonorano chi ne prende cura; — che altro resterà al bisogno se non quell'ordine novello, creato in questi ultimi tempi dalla divina misericordia pel pietoso servizio delle carceri rigurgitanti?

Oh, caro Gioberti, i tuoi sdegni, i tuoi voti sono quelli d' un' anima vaga d' un ordin di cose migliore, che non è il presente. Ma vuoi vedere, che questo presente sia migliore? Frena la tua impazienza, e prosegui, come avevi incominciato, a predicare moderazione, e accordo di volontà, sicchè ognuno adempia il bene, che è tra le sue mani, senza creare nuove cagioni di discordie e di guai.

#### DIFFERENZA ULTIMA.

Egli era giusto, che io separassi dal corpo della Compagnia di Gesù ciò che non è d' essa. — Per quanto ci sian care le relazioni, che i nostri ministeri ci fanno contrarre nel mondo, egli era giusto, che in una causa dove si tratta d' infamia, e di setta, io provvedessi a ciò, che nè gli innocenti fossero con noi disonorati, nè sopra noi pesassero i torti di chi è straniero al nostro Istituto.

Or tuttavia ridotti a dover concepire la Compagnia di Gesù nell' essere suo proprio, vedo bene, che le nostre contese non la riguardano tanto nella costituzione sua organica, o nella sua gerarchia — ma piuttosto nelle massime che professa, e nella sua condotta.

Qui è dunque dove io vorrei, che venissimo d' accordo per istabilire, che cosa la Compagnia sia o non sia, che cosa debba o non debba essere.

Già non sarebbe più degna di te quella volgare definizione, che chiama Gesuiti e Gesuitismo *tout, ce dont on ne veut pas*: tutto ciò che fa schifo, tutto ciò che si disprezza. In questo caso Abd-el-Kader, il Giugurta de' nostri tempi sarebbe pei Francesi Gesuita professo, e a vicenda per l' odio che quegli porta ai prodi conquistatori, applicherebbe ad essi l' oltraggioso nome. — Nè meno sei tu di coloro, che si adombrano di quel cappello ampio-faldato, che ricorda un tempo, in cui le teste pensavano per avventura altrimenti da quello, che ora vuolsi. Esso non è o sì essenziale all' esser nostro, o sì esclusivamente di soli noi, da esser fatto segno agli strali di chi odia il Gesuitismo.

Il tuo procedere ancorchè d' uomo sdegnato, e caldo d' amor di patria, non dissente dal seguire una discussione ragionata per principî. — Or dunque raccogliendo i principî, che vai accennando, io cerco da te l' idea del Gesuitismo, cioè dello Spirito che anima la Compagnia di Gesù, e la mette in opposizione con quello onde avrebbe a condursi ed essa e la Chiesa e il mondo.

Altri ci dice Papisti, ed altri traditori de' Papi — questi cortigiani de' Principi, quelli tirannicidi — di qua ci si grida addosso la croce, perchè assolutisti, di là perchè fautori de' malcontenti — allarghiamo le coscienze da far vergogna per lo scapito.

*Pellico.*

berali e devoti alla causa de' Re, e amatori de' lumi, ed esperti della vita pratica, quali ci predican buoni, savî, fedeli a rendere a ciascuno il suo debito, utili alla Chiesa ed allo Stato.

Ma fra giudizî così diversi tu hai dovuto fermare il tuo ; e sebbene a chi lo voglia non sia difficile il riunirli tutti dicendo, che il bene è solo apparente, e la colpa nostra ci fa capaci degli eccessi tra loro più opposti, io non iscorgo tuttavia che tu abbi preso un partito così violento. — Vi ti vorrebbe trascinare talora l'impeto dello sdegno — ma il dannare affatto il nostro istituto quale l'abbiam ricevuto da grande Ignazio, e da Pio VII ti ripugna pur alquanto — il dannare tutti i Gesuiti come uomini di doppia coscienza, non ti par giusto — l'immaginare tali mostre barbarie, che vogliano per passione il male, ed ogni male, ed i mali più contrari parrebbe pazzia — il negare ogni rispetto a chi trattandoci da vicino si dà il disturbo di stimarci, e di rendere di noi buona testimonianza, sarebbe per te, che non li tratti un procedere ingiusto.

Dov' è dunque il punto vero e distintivo di quel malvagio esser nostro, che cattolici, fra gli ordini religiosi, ci costituisce essenzialmente come Gesuiti, quasi simili, che siamo ?

Fin tanto, che tu ci attribuiresli colpe, che sono comuni ad altri cattolici, e che non possono mai incontrarsi in qualche particolar individuo di qualsiasi ordine religioso, non puoi incolpare nè la Compagnia sola, nè il Gesuitismo in sè stesso, come è distinto dagli altri.

Fosti tu ancora per dire, che la Compagnia sola ed intera è da dannarsi, perchè sola fra le società particolari è universalmente perversa, potresti mostrarci tratti nati quale ad un vizio, quale ad un altro — ma allora saremmo divisi tra noi di sentimenti, e di interessi — non sarebbe quell' unità di rea dottrina, e di intento, che si sa ridursi in quella sola parola di Gesuitismo. — Quel Gesuitismo così uno, che se tanti Gesuiti virtuosi, di sana coscienza — e guida tuttavia tanti altri Gesuiti tutti versati alle opere più degne d' infamia, deve potersi definire per *genus proximum differentiam ultimam*.

In genere sia un sistema di religione, di politica, di filosofia, di cabala, ciò che vuoi, nell' ultima sua differenza, cerco io, che cos' è, onde si distingua da tutte le altre creazioni umane per così specialmente odiosa ?

Rinchiuda molti vizi, tutti i vizi ; qual è il vizio dominante, o quello, che mira di più direttamente di mira ?

Il tuo scritto ha uno scopo politico — Quando discendi a parlarvi del *monachismo* ne pronunzii la definizione, che risponde all' aspetto, sotto il quale intendi di trattarne, ed è in quanto è *strumento di civiltà*. « ( Che cos' è il monachismo se non una speciale *unione e intesa di uomini che mediante le idee e le pratiche religiose è strumento di civiltà* ? Proleg. p. 96 ) » — Ond' è che ove gi a discorrere de' Gesuiti, li danni appunto perchè mediante le idee e le pratiche religiose, da loro stravolte e corrotte, lungi dal giovare alla civiltà riescono a farle ostacolo, e a perpetuare la barbarie. Che se altri cercasse ancor di sapere che de' due peccati sia più proprio de' Gesuiti, o il corrompere prima per qualsivoglia ragione le idee e le pratiche loro religiose, come accade a molti cristiani, e indi la necessaria conseguenza e contro l' intenzione trovarsi in opposizione con la civiltà, oppure odiare *a priori* la civiltà, e per odio di quella studiarsi a bella posta di corrompere le pratiche e le idee religiose, tu leveresti facilmente il dubbio. Perchè bene ai Gesuiti non si debba risparmiare fra le altre macchie neppur l' ignoranza, fu tuttavia ignoranza sì cieca quella, che li fece sì sottili e misurati nella corruzione delle idee e delle pratiche religiose da star ne' confini della fede, e da mantene-



loro ispirato da passioni basse, o da audace ambizione d' impero, è pur quello che distingue la lor Compagnia da qualunque genere di società religiosa.

Onde risulterebbe che la differenza ultima del Gesuitismo, come tu lo consideri, sarebbe una volontaria e calcolata corruttela delle idee e delle pratiche proprie d' un istituto religioso, qual è la Compagnia di Gesù.

E poichè il fine immediato che qui da te si riguarda come da intendersi e conseguirsi dagli ordini religiosi è la civiltà, dunque il volontario e calcolato contrasto del Gesuitismo con la civiltà, è il vizio, che qui specifica l' abuso ed il travolgimento qualsiasi de' Gesuiti rispetto ai mezzi che la religione loro poneva in mano.

Se la Compagnia *corrompe la morale, offende il dogma, avvilisce il culto, snerva la disciplina, debilita la gerarchia, non lascia intatta alcuna parte delle cose sacre*, questi, come abusi contro la Religione, non sarebbero per loro natura da denunziarsi ad altri fuorchè alla Chiesa, la quale è giudice in queste materie — ma la Compagnia *pretesendo un pio zelo alle proprie opere, comprime, altera, traveste, affievolisce, combatte, estingue l' ingegno, il sapere, il costume, gli affetti domestici, la buona educazione, la virtù civile, la libertà patria, l' unità politica, l' indipendenza nazionale, e tutto quanto il corredo, gli acquisti, i voti, le speranze dell' incivilimento* — e tutto ciò in nome della Religione (Prolegomena, pag. 159, et passim al. ), ed ecco perchè è da denunziarsi all' Italia, a tutti gli Stati, affinchè custodi come sono ciascuno ne' propri confini del corredo, e delle speranze dell' incivilimento, mettano mano a campare dall' intera perdizione il sacro deposito.

La Chiesa sola veramente dovrà considerare quanto il falso zelo della Compagnia nel contrastare agli interessi delle nazioni sia dannoso ai suoi sovrani interessi, mentre *rende la Religione spregevole, ridicola, odiosa, formidabile al mondo*; nè miri *all' intento degli operatori, e ti restringi ai fatti esterni*; ma se il mondo considera ancora di nutrire verso la religione alcun senso di rispetto e di amore, convien pure ch' esso sappia, che il barbaro zelo de' Gesuiti lo forzerebbe a perdere in uno scetticismo, e pietà, e sommissione alla legge divina.

Perciò si dimostra tutta l' empietà de' Gesuiti; perchè il mondo senta a che estremo grado di barbarie sia per essere da loro trascinato — quando non contenti que' mezzi di metter ostacolo ad ogni progresso dell' incivilimento, tendono persino a smorzare per ogni dove quell' unico lume, che raccoglie in sè ogni raggio di bene.

Ora così determinato l' aspetto, sotto il quale prendi principalmente a considerare e a combattere la Compagnia di Gesù — e dichiarato che il suo vizio capitale sarebbe di opporsi a quel moderato, legittimo, necessario progresso, nella via del vivente civile, cui tendono di concerto tutti gli elementi di morale attività, che sono in natura e da Dio — vedi, ch' io non fo poco ad accettare la questione quale risulta, in tutta la sua odiosità, e in tutta la sua ampiezza.

Ma confesserò, ch' io sento di non esser solo; non già per essere sì ben armato e compatta, e audace questa Gesuitica legione, cui appartengo, sì perchè a sostenere siffatta accusa, e a discolparne la Compagnia, mi si offre Gesù Cristo medesimo.

Onde non farò qui in prima, fuorchè considerare l' una a confronto dell' altra, l' azione di Gesù Cristo nell' opera dell' umano incivilimento, e l' azione della Compagnia, che si onora del suo medesimo nome, non meno che del suo medesimo ministero.

Qual misura di mezzi ha egli adoperato? — e quale adopera, o trascura la Compagnia?

Di che s' incolpa la Compagnia? — e di che similmente non fu incolpato il mondo politico de' suoi tempi Gesù Cristo?

Come ha risposto, e vinto Gesù Cristo? — e perchè la Compagnia avrebbe potuto far meglio?

vunque si tratta di interessi umani, io non voglio contendere sopra il valore intrinseco, nè relativo alle presenti condizioni, che alcun sistema politico, o tuo, o d' altri, possa avere.

Io discorro con te — tu dichiari la civiltà e il progresso, che tu vorresti ; questa sia il migliore concetto da farsene. — A chiunque pensi altrimenti intorno ai veri interessi attuali, risponderanno le medesime mie riflessioni.

## GESÙ CRISTO, E LA COMPAGNIA RISPETTO ALLA CIVILTÀ.

Da quando Gesù Cristo comunicò la sua missione divina agli Apostoli fino alla futura consumazione de' secoli, tutta l' opera di quell'ordine di cristiani, cui è commesso l' insegnamento e la direzione degli altri, fu e sarà un semplice proseguire l' opera di Gesù Cristo medesimo a norma della sua parola e de' suoi esempi.

*Data est mihi omnis potestas in coelo et in terra. Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos.—Docentes eos servare omnia quaecumque mandavi vobis. Et ecce ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus, usque ad consummationem saeculi* (Matth. ult.).

Quel tutto, ch' egli è rispetto al secolo, risplende per partecipazione nel sacerdozio. Sebbene ciò ch' egli cominciò, e prosegue tuttavia, come principio solo efficace al tutto, s' adempie dai suoi ministri ripartitamente.

Altra è l' opera del ministero pastorale, il quale possiede la giurisdizione, e sparte a buon diritto i pascoli ed il gregge. — Altra quella del sacerdozio monastico, il quale attende specialmente all' orazione, al culto, alla dottrina, all' espiatione. Altra quella di coloro, che partecipando della solitudine dell' uno, e dell' attività dell' altro risalgono al possibile all' idea del tipo primiero ed universale per essere tu a tutti, e così in aiuto de' pastori come del gregge : così presenti alla custodia della dottrina sacra, come al soccorso di chi naviga sul mare del mondo : così pronti a litare per la fede, come a promuovere l' osservanza della legge. — Ma la condizione intima della divina missione esigea che comunque fosse per dividersi l' opera del sacerdozio — chi avea da assumerne una parte, non lasciasse di concorrere ai doveri dell' altra, e di serbare con quella un carattere comune di somiglianza.

— Quindi il pastore ecclesiastico, il quale più partecipa all' attività esteriore nel mondo, anch' egli deve serbare una discreta misura di santo isolamento e l' uso di attenersi alla sacra dottrina. — Il sacerdote contemplativo e solitario è bene spesso nella storia della Chiesa l' atleta preparato da Dio per essere lanciato in mezzo alle battaglie, o l' Apostolo, ed il Pastore di nuove nazioni. — E ciò che distingue la terza forma è appunto il partecipare in più ugual temperamento a' comuni doveri delle due prime, giusta quell' idea universale dell' essere di sacerdote *pro hominibus in iis qui sunt ad Deum*.

La varietà de' sacri ufficii — e la distinzione degli ordini ecclesiastici in regolare, o regolare — pastorale, monacale, od apostolico — era voluta per la manifestazione della grazia multiforme di Cristo nell' immenso spazio de' secoli serbati all' arbitrio del suo arbitrio, e della sua multiforme corruzione. — Ma tutta tornò a rifondersi in un solo principio, in un solo termine in Gesù Cristo, *auctorem et consummatorem fidei*, — e nel suo complesso, non fu altro fuorchè ritrarre la sovraimmaginazione del sacerdozio, ch' egli ci diede in sè, come maestro e mediatore e vittima del mondo. — Che se ogni ceto diverso di ministri per il diverso modo, in che partecipa a questo sacerdozio, si trova posto altresì in relazioni diverse col mondo per doverlo trattare, e soccorrere in diversa misura di opere — quegli istituti però, ne' quali

guisa che più dappresso ritragga i modi del sovrano maestro degli Apostoli, che Gesù Cristo medesimo universale ed eterno Pontefice.

Ora, per venire a noi, le relazioni, che Gesù Cristo prese col mondo de' suoi tempi, gli ufficii, ch'egli esercitò, la forma, sotto cui egli presentò la verità, e i doni celesti sono state cose tutte divinamente calcolate in ordine alla civiltà, non meno che alla salute eterna?

— Se ciò è, quella parte del sacerdozio cattolico, che è istituita in forma di mantenere in tutte le sue relazioni con la società laicale la più possibile somiglianza con la maniera presa da Gesù Cristo, sarà eziandio benemerita della civiltà. — E la Compagnia è uno di questi istituti, basterà ch'essa si trovi osservante della sua regola, e sarà dimostrata amica del secolo e delle nazioni, quanto sia da desiderarsi l'assenza del comune maestro.

Prima però, ch'io mi stringa a questa sola considerazione dell'osservanza, cioè che la Compagnia si mantien fedele al suo istituto, (che sarebbe la compiuta dimostrazione de' suoi meriti nel concorso che da lei si può esigere a favore della civiltà) voglio antivenire una difficoltà che tu potresti farmi, ed è in qualche modo accennata nel tuo scritto.

Per quanto stia bene alla Compagnia il cercare di accostarsi alla forma primitiva ed universale del Sacerdozio Apostolico, — essa è però una porzione particolare di quest'istituto perpetuo nella Chiesa, — porzione destinata per conseguenza a prendere un carattere suo proprio.

Ora la convenienza del carattere, che ha da esserle proprio, dee consistere nell'armonizzare per le sue forme speciali con le circostanze di tempo e di luogo, e di grado diverso di coltura, in cui si trova il mondo, per la cui salute la Compagnia è istituita. — E questa convenienza fu di fatto una delle cure del suo fondatore, e finché fu perfetta, come nel secolo in cui nacque, l'opera di lei corrispose perfettamente a quella, che Gesù Cristo compì in persona col mettersi anch'Egli in armonia col secol suo.

Se la Compagnia pertanto, troppo fedele per avventura a certe sue tradizioni, a certe pratiche domestiche, si mantiene pure qual'era ne' suoi primordii, abbiasene la lode che le conviene; ma non ponendosi in armonia col tempo essa manca in questo caso a una tradizione fondamentale, manca allo scopo del suo istituto, manca al suo secolo — e il secolo non può non respingerla, come falsa immagine di Gesù Cristo, come inutile peso, ed ostacolo alla corrente civiltà. — Anzi la dee respingere come necessariamente depravata nella propria radice, poichè perduto lo spirito di universale carità apostolica, non sa più attendere, che a sola sè stessa, e tirauneggiare coloro, cui doveva essere amica.

Rispondo adunque. — Sì, ogni nuovo istituto è creato per proseguire l'opera di Gesù Cristo in armonia con le condizioni del secolo, in cui sorge; — così tuttavia che qual novello istituto prenderà la sua forma speciale dalle circostanze più proprie di un luogo o di un tempo, tale sarà men proprio a proseguire l'opera di Gesù Cristo in tempi e in luoghi, e in ministeri diversi, e quegli altri per lo contrario avranno più durevole, e più universale efficacia, i quali manterranno col mondo esteriore quella misura di relazioni, che sono meno esposte ad alterarsi nella successione de' secoli. Queste relazioni poi, questa convenienza, quest'armonia che ogni istituto religioso e ogni ministero sacerdotale debba mantenere col secolo, s'intendono riguardare non già l'intimo genio di questo, in quanto possa avere di perverso, (che sotto quest'aspetto non è possibile alleanza, ma devono aver luogo rispetto a quel tanto di buono onde il mondo stesso apre al Sacerdozio la via a potergli recare la verità e la grazia celeste — il che suppone in sostanza perpetuo contrasto quanto alle massime, ed alle opere, tra quello che tende all'errore ed al vizio, e quello che ne lo deve ritrarre.



la carità sempre si ricca di trovati nel sopprimerli ad ogni bisogno presente non di creare nella Chiesa cattolica a speciale servizio ora degli ignoranti, ora degli infermi, ora de' carcerati, sotto quella varietà di riforma, che vediamo mutarsi d'età in età. Anzi così si compie per divina Provvidenza, la desiderabile armonia tra le varie condizioni delle età e del mondo, e i vari ufficii del Sacerdozio cattolico, e i vari istituti cui discorriamo. Questi non devono alterare le loro forme proprie, ma quelli di cui è impronta una forma più universale, devono mantenere la loro, ch'è sola propria a giovare sempre, nè possono temere peggio fuorchè di limitarsi a qualsiasi specialità; quelli che son determinati di lor natura ad uno special servizio, nascono e muoiono secondo che sorge o cessa il bisogno, cui Dio li misura; nè è diritto che possa farli essere altri da quelli ch'ei li va creando.

Posto il sistema, che Dio ha stabilito così nell'opera della Redenzione, come quella della Creazione, le cause seconde e particolari son quelle, che applicano a termini estremi l'efficacia della causa universale. — Onde ogni buon diritto vuole che siccome dalle varie condizioni della società è sentita più immediatamente l'influenza benefica di certi istituti speciali, i quali discendono a tutte le miserie, e si diversificano a norma di tutti i gusti, così a questi ciascuna renda il primo tributo della sua fiducia e della sua gratitudine.

Ma tu non gioveresti nè alla società, nè alla religione, se insegnassi a disprezzare a vituperare quegli altri istituti, i quali posti anch'essi, rispetto a Gesù Cristo, e alla Chiesa, nell'ordine delle cause seconde, hanno però ricevuto fin dal loro nascere una forma più o meno universale, per l'universalità de' fini a loro imposti.

Fra gli ordini di cotal forma, e nati a giovare con efficacia perpetua, ed illimitata, menzioni tu a buon diritto l'ordine santissimo di S. Benedetto. Ed amo di aggiungere qui a compimento dell'elogio, con cui lo commendi alla venerazione dell'Istituto, che la nostra patria è testimonio del vigore di vita che in esso ferve, e si svolge per pigliare l'augusto splendor primiero. Il piissimo Abate Casareto è giunto a ristabilire alcune Badie nel genovesato, richiamandovi la vita comune e la pura regola di S. Benedetto. — E dopo aver noi applaudito, e secondato coi nostri voti i suoi primi successi, godiamo ora e pel bene della Chiesa, e per l'amicizia che ci stringe di parecchi anni, quel benemerito prelato, di vedere che il rifiorir della regola, già le ha restituito la sua condita, e ridestate le più belle speranze. A Monte Cassino parimente si avviano a ristabilire la primitiva loro regola gli studi e le osservanze benedettine, ed è singolar consolazione il noverare in quel monastero per nostri amici que' medesimi uomini, verso i quali parresti crederci stranieri od invidiosi.

Tu non conoscevi per avventura i vincoli santissimi, che stringono la Compagnia con tutti gli ordini, che sono nella Chiesa, e specialmente fra gli ordini monastici con quello di S. Benedetto, e col Certosino.

Tu hai forse inteso di far valere a nostro danno certe ombre di antagonismo, che si sono dissipate fra le gare teologiche o letterarie del secolo passato. Ma ti sei ingannato se hai prese quelle ombre per un muro da potersi rialzare a monumento, e nuova occasione di mutua discordia. — Stiamo unicamente rivolti gli uni e gli altri al comune ristoratore Pio VII. — Alunno già di S. Benedetto, Pio VII avea partecipato da prima alle prevenzioni, che alcuni dotti del suo ordine aveano insinuate a grande oltraggio della Compagnia — ma levato a più alta sfera, e a quell'altezza, cui conduce la meditazione e l'esperienza di sì grandi rovesciamenti, quali esso vide, non seppe sopportare il pensiero di quelle meschine e sì funeste rivalità. Egli stese le mani a tutti e ambi gli ordini da diverse vicende prostrati, li risuscitò con pari miracolo, e v

Questa fratellanza dell'ordine veneratissimo di S. Benedetto con la Compagnia di Gesù è tanto più intima, quanto l'uno e l'altro partecipano più dappresso dell'essere di istituti primitivi nella loro sfera e di amplissima efficacia. L'ordine di S. Benedetto nella sfera del sacerdozio monastico, è il tipo universale — al quale si adattano più o meno altre forme più speciali adattate a diverse circostanze di tempi e di luoghi. La Compagnia di Gesù, ancorchè non nata la prima ad aprire la via al sacerdozio militante ed apostolico, fu però anch'essa costituita da S. Ignazio, risuscitata da Pio VII sopra ogni specialità di fini, e di mezzi, per tendere universalmente al maggior servizio di Dio con tutto quell'apprestamento di aiuti, e tutta quella varietà di imprese, che meglio giovi a rianimare lo stato della Chiesa cattolica. — L'ordine monastico in tutta la sua ampiezza e con tutte le varietà, onde consta, proseguirà l'opera di Gesù Cristo nel mondo con le attrattive d'una santità veneranda, oracolo perpetuo di dottrina celeste, asilo sicuro all'innocenza, riparo alle anime stanche delle battaglie della vita, specchio eccelsò di virtù austere accoppiate alla scienza ed alla modestia, consolante pegno agli uomini della misericordia, con cui Iddio vorrà guardarli, finchè la terra serberà in onore quel santuario d'orazione, di penitenza, e di angelica purità. E tuttavia, come già ne' secoli addietro l'abbondanza di spirito, che si rinchiude nella regola primitiva del monacato non cessò di stimolare fra i suoi seguaci uno zelo operoso, e di fornire eruditi scrittori, istitutori della gioventù, pastori eminentissimi e ferventi missionari, così torniamo oggi a vedere presso i discepoli di S. Benedetto accoppiato all'amore del ritiro e dell'orazione il merito d'un'attività multiforme (2).

Ciò non di meno poichè a compiere l'opera dell'eterno Sacerdote su questa terra non dovettero mancare istituti apostolici, i quali si inoltrassero più avanti nel consorzio degli uomini per soccorrere ogni debole, e rialzare i feriti, e prevenire i nemici assalti, e dilatare i confini del Regno di Dio con ogni varietà di mezzi, che convengono a tal ministero, non parrà sì lontano dal concetto della Sapienza divina, che fra queste sacre milizie altre sian dedite a fini e ad opere più speciali, e la Compagnia di Gesù si noveri fra quelle, cui incombe il debito di vegliare e di faticare più universalmente in tutto ciò, che riguarda la gloria di Dio, e la salute de' prossimi.

Così intendo io, che la bontà, l'utilità, la perfezione d'un istituto religioso non escluda il pregio di alcun altro; così distinguo non solo l'uno dall'altro secondo i suoi fini propri, ma gli speciali dagli universali, e di questi pure varia la forma monastica o apostolica; così parmi, che dopo innalzato fra quelli di monastica forma il più augusto, che è l'ordine Benedettino, trovi luogo fra gli ordini apostolici la Compagnia di Gesù. Il medesimo Gesù informa quello e questi. Ma di ciascuno sono varie le proprietà.

Sopra della vita pubblica di Cristo si constitui l'ordine illustre di S. Domenico sublime apostolato della dottrina; su questa S. Francesco d'Assisi formò il suo apostolato più popolare dell'istruzione e dell'edificazione d'ogni classe de' fedeli;

(1) Il Card. Pacca nella *Relaz. de' due viaggi fatti da lui in Francia*, part. 2.<sup>a</sup> cap. narra come fin da Fontainebleau andasse trattenendo Sua Santità del ripristinare la Compagnia ed ivi è che osserva come dalla mente di Pio VII, e dalla sua fossero dissipate le preoccupazioni, nelle quali l'uno e l'altro erano stati educati rispetto al nostro istituto.

(2) Ho visto con singolar compiacenza nella Badia di S. Giovanni in Parma, e vedremo fra poco risuscitata nelle vicinanze di Genova quella forma di convitti, dove gli antichi Benedettini educarono tanta parte della gioventù cristiana così al viver civile, come ad edificazione della Chiesa. Sarà men grato o men nuovo per molti, ch'io aggiunga fra le imprese dello zelo monastico l'erudito giornale periodico intitolato *l'Auxiliaire Catholique* preso testè a pubblicarsi da' PP. Benedettini di Francia.

pietosa di lumi ed altezza di viste, quella dovizia di mezzi, e quel vigore di op  
di santità, onde giovasse senza timor di fatiche o di vituperi o di sacrifici a tutta  
ta è la chiesa cattolica.

Ma in questo senso io posso adunque inalzare la Compagnia di Gesù fra g  
dini di universale apostolato, cioè in quanto istituita a concorrere a tutti gli  
apostolici, non si reputa nè sola certamente, nè la più alta, ma nè pure ristretta  
alcuna specialità di ministeri, che le tolga di esser tutta a tutti. Non istrana vag  
di onore o di indipendenza la fa ambiziosa di questa forma di essere. Nè per e  
quale è costituita, ambisce essa già l'universale direzione della Chiesa; — ma p  
si ha nel senso, che dice S. Paolo, per debitrice inverso tutti, non è pericolo, pe  
non vegli, non è miseria, cui non voglia soccorrere, non è virtù, cui non debba  
muovere, non è mezzo di salute eterna pei prossimi, cui non sia sollecita di dar m  
non è ordine di pastori o di religiosi o di fedeli, cui non tengasi presta a render a  
gio. — Per ciò stesso il suo santo Fondatore, anzi la santa Sede medesima volle  
questo ordine apostolico s'intitolasse Compagnia di Gesù. Non certo, come finse  
tenerlo alcuni, quasi essa presumesse di chiudere in sè sola tutte le glorie della C  
sa; ma affinchè avesse davanti a sè nel proprio nome perpetua l'idea di quella f  
di vita, cui è chiamata a professare, perpetuo uno stimolo a cercare umilmente  
meditazione della vita di Cristo, e nell'invocazione della sua grazia onnipotente,  
vo senso della propria debolezza, e la sicurtà d'ogni soccorso divino.

Ma per tornare omai alla proposta questione dell'armonizzare che la Co  
gnia possa o debba in questa sua forma di apostolato universale con lo stato  
siasi dell'umana civiltà, basti il considerare, che anche in questa si distinguono  
fra i suoi pregi, come fra i suoi bisogni, altri più accidentali e mutabili, ed altri  
petui ed universali; onde non è strano che Dio e la Chiesa vadano provvedendo  
uni ed agli altri con mezzi proporzionati; ed i mezzi di più ampia e durevole e  
cia, abbiano da essere meno soggetti al variare delle circostanze.

La civiltà considerata come il complesso de' vantaggi possibili ad otteners  
ben essere della società umana in questa terra, risulta dalla retta applicazione  
gli uomini facciano non solo in privato, ma in comune, di ogni loro facoltà natu  
La qual cosa importa, che le naturali facoltà debbano essere al possibile svol  
tutta la loro energia, e dirette nel loro esercizio ad uno scopo ben inteso.

Ora quest'opera s'avvia dapprima dalla Religione più immediatamente.

Essa è quella, che leva le menti ai sovrani principj del vero e del buono. I  
nocenza ch'essa protegge favorisce ogni lume naturale di ragione. Il culto prom  
le prime arti. La legge divina svolge e salda ogni idea di giustizia, ogni legam  
società. Ma ad ogni nuovo grado di ben essere, che la società vada così acquista  
crescono altresì e si perfezionano i mezzi naturali di svolgere e di dirigere att  
te le facoltà d'ogni individuo al comune lavoro — e il progresso d'ogni nuov  
nerazione nella via intrapresa conduce a vicenda a concepire più perfettame  
con maggior precisione lo scopo, cui si debba mirare, e a mirarvi con una fid  
ed una perseveranza, che deve ognora più accelerarne il conseguimento.

Di qui avviene ciò, che tu dici in linguaggio troppo più degno del mio,  
cioè l'opera dell'incivilimento non rimane più così immediatamente, come nelle  
età de' popoli, tra le mani del sacerdozio — ma ne riceve solo quell'incessante di  
ne, e quell'efficace stimolo, la cui virtù risiede negli eterni, ed universali princi  
verità rivelati da Gesù Cristo, e affidati al magistero della Chiesa cattolica. — L  
avviene parimente che ogni nuova perfezione acquistata al viver civile gli dà un  
vo aspetto, creando nuove esigenze, nuove arti, nuove leggi; ma in realtà la p  
zione, e la squisitezza onde ogni età novella si mostra più vaga nè può mai

Resta pertanto, che il sacerdozio mantenga tuttora fra le sue mani, quella porzione della progrediente società, che più partecipa per debolezza di età, o per viziosità proprio, o per imperfezion di natura, di quella che chiameremmo natia barbarie, quale, non è pur condizione del volgo soltanto, ma di chiunque nasce col bisogno d'un Dio — d'un'educazione religiosa. Sempre resta, che la religione s'adopere ad emendare col ministero suo divino il difetto dell'uomo, sempre è da infondere la luce di verità elementare, sempre da porgere direzione immediata, sempre da tener viva l'azione, e l'impero del santo Vangelo sopra le passioni, cui la civiltà ingentilisce sì, ma non santifica, non riduce a sincero ossequio della virtù cristiana.

Ora a sovvenire al perpetuo incarico di reggere ad un tempo le più alte sfere delle intelligenze colte, e di porger la mano alla parte infima della società la sapiente carità, che regge la Chiesa cattolica le ispirò di mantenere, e di svolgere ognuna meglio quelle due forme di reggimento, che sono impresse in tutto l'universo. — E a quel modo che nell'ordine naturale, e nell'ordine gerarchico, o civile tutto procede per via di cause universali, e di cause particolari — così (per non parlare di ciò che avvenga nelle altre due sfere di sacerdozio pastorale e monastico) nella sfera del sacerdozio militante si vennero a distinguere a poco a poco varie gradazioni di istituti gli uni più e più speciali, e determinati a particolari bisogni, gli altri fermati ad operare con più universale efficacia senza limitazione di fine o di mezzi. Quindi si ha del pari stromento a civiltà quelle unioni di uomini, i quali mediante le idee e le pratiche religiose discendono ad affratellarsi coll'artigiano, col fanciullo, col selvaggio, col sordo-muto, con l'infermo, col prigioniero, e quelli, che mediante le idee e le pratiche religiose serbino un'influenza più ampia sopra la società in generale, o sia nell'ordine delle scienze, e della sacra dottrina, ossia nell'ordine d'ogni opera pubblica bene.

Guai certamente, nè posso ripeterlo troppo sovente, guai chi dimentica esser questo uno sotto queste diverse forme il sacerdozio di Gesù Cristo. Guai a me, in prima, se credessi rinchiuso tra i miei socii e me quel tanto di dottrina, di virtù e di diritti che merita a Gesù Cristo solo ed alla chiesa universale le benedizioni e la docilità de' popoli. Ma guai a te pure, se, cadendo nella volgare infermità riconosci Gesù Cristo operante in soli certi atti speciali, e lo bestemmii quando riveste le forme, che sono più sue.

Vedi infatti Gesù Cristo. Perchè è egli il maestro, il Salvatore di tutti gli uomini? Non già per essere stato solo o l'amico de' poveri, o il martire dell'innocenza, o il predicatore della carità, od il sapiente commentatore de' libri santi; ma sì perchè fu eminentemente quel tutto che era a volersi pel comune risorgimento degli spiriti, sì perchè senza quasi segnalarsi per una forma speciale di opere si segnalò tuttavia a dirigere tutt'insieme e la dottrina e la vita ad operare la salute delle anime, sì perchè avviati i diversi ministeri di salute gli diede in mano a chi li perpetuasse, e li applicasse distintamente ai rinascenti bisogni.

Ed ecco alcuni saggi di questa universale ed efficace influenza, che la Compagnia partecipa da Gesù Cristo con ogni istituto di somigliante vocazione. — Certo non sono soli i Gesuiti, quelli che dopo il Concilio di Trento han ravvivato lo splendore della Chiesa cattolica; essi eran pochissimi a que' tempi; ma promoveano salutari riforme con que' mezzi, che lo spirito di Dio loro aveva forniti a persuadere e ad accendere gli animi; e le operavano poi di fatto que' tanti altri santissimi personaggi cui un istinto mirabile di umiltà piegava a mettersi tra le mani d'Ignazio de' suoi compagni. — Certo non furon soli i Gesuiti a reggere i tanti istituti di pietà, di carità, o di penitenza nati in quel gran secolo dell'emulazione religiosa. —

*Pellico.*

Compagnia. Il suo spirito di operosità in ogni maniera di utili trovati fu quello, le diede virtù da creare tanti ricoveri all'infanzia, e ad ogni guisa di miserabili, ti ospedali, tante case di rifugio, o di correzione, o di catecumenato, tante società Missionarii, tante scuole pe' poveri, tante istituzioni di moltiforme carità, impose a dirigersi tutte da lei, ma tutte suo merito e sua consolazione per l'indicibile seguitone a beneficio de' popoli. — E v'ha dopo l'apparire d'Ignazio un santo di che merito presso gli amici dell'umanità, il quale non sia stato amico di lui e sua Compagnia? e non si veda tratto da Dio quale ad attingere presso di lei le grazie dello spirito quale a cercare consiglio, o non abbia avuto da lei incoraggiamento e sostegno in ogni opera più contrastata di pubblico bene? E ove rammentassi solo un S. Vincenzo de' Paoli, sì benemerito dell'umanità, e della chiesa, solea pur per discepolo de' discepoli d'Ignazio, che un S. Carlo Borromeo, un S. Francesco Sales, un S. Alfonso de' Liguori, e i BB. Valfrè, Barbarigo, Ribera, Leonard Portomaurizio ec. (1), sì efficaci riformatori degli spiriti e del cristiano costume, si temperarono la lor anima alla medesima scuola, non avrei forse mostrato abbastanza come, senza pure volersi attrarre ogni cosa, la Compagnia sia nata ad influir com'è proprio d'ogni istituto di vocazione somigliante sopra le cause istesse, danno moto e direzione allo zelo ecclesiastico, e quindi all'andamento di tutta la società? Che se la modestia de' miei fratelli non mel vietasse, potrei pur aggiungere che ancora in quest'ultima sua età la Compagnia prosegue un simil ministero de' suoi consigli, con le sue scuole, con le sue congregazioni, col suo spirito di dedizione e di fervore, giovando nelle famiglie, e ne' pubblici stabilimenti, nelle carceri e nelle milizie, e persino nel venerabile ceto de' pastori e de' religiosi a ravvivare a fomentare in ogni ordine di persone lo studio de' propri doveri.

Ma la forma di questo istituto medesimo, ed il suo stato ancor presente basta a dar l'idea del come esso partecipi all'apostolato universale, senza limitazione di terminazione a speciali servizi.

Non è speciale istituto della Compagnia il segnalarsi in tale o tal altra pratica di culto esteriore, bensì le promuove tutte in quanto giovino alla fede, alla pietà, alle relazioni sociali. Nè punto ci impegna a professare indeterminata forma questa o quella peculiare virtù; bensì ci insegna a temperarle tutte con tal discrezione, che escluda il fervore, e risponda ad ogni dovere. Nè è volto così principalmente a missioni straniere, che non sia tutto del pari ad ogni opera di zelo voluta a beneficio de' popoli più fedeli e più colti. Nè l'attività esteriore vi si disgiunge dall'assiduità del meditare e dell'orare in ispirito. Nè il trattare col mondo vi scema punto il rispetto della povertà, o il debito di attendere unicamente all'opera di Dio. — Ma prendete per suo fine il più alto, cui abbia diretto le sue mire il Salvatore medesimo, benedite opere virtuose che sarebbero il fine immediato di altri istituti, sono rispetto al fine niente più, che mezzi indifferenti a scegliersi, secondo che torni a maggior servizio di Dio e delle anime.

La qual professione imprime nella forma esteriore della Compagnia un aspetto che io (*ut minus sapiens dico*) non saprei paragonare propriamente ad altro fuorchè a quello di Gesù Cristo medesimo. — Un aspetto di virtù benigna, accessibile, e comune a tutti, eppur d'una grandezza e d'una potenza sovra il comune. Perdonami se trattengo sopra questa idea; chè non è gloria più lontana da ogni superbia, nè

(1) La passione sempre vile nel suo operare è giunta nella ristampa di certi libri a sopprimere o modificare ciò che vi era di qualche merito o gloria della Compagnia, tuttochè fondato sopra fatti e testimonianze irrepugnabili.



ricchi, de' gloriosi di questo mondo; non fa pompa di sè, non usa il tuon del' impero, non isgomenta i piccioli, non gradisce le adulazioni, non si arma di puntigli — eppure se non si reca presso di lei una mente ingenua, e una coscienza diritta, non si regge senza un certo che di vergogna e di timore all' impressione, che risalta da quel suo aspetto di sapienza, e di vigore nel volere la virtù. Tutte le anime infelici e colpevoli trovano presso di lei misericordia in nome di Cristo, eppur non è passione che non la tema, e non la detesti. Tutte le condizioni d' uomini trovano presso di lei una dottrina, un' autentica missione, che le inchina ad accettare con fiducia il suo magistero, come quello ch' è uno col magistero della Chiesa, e di Cristo, a cui conduce — eppure uomini d' ogni condizione e dotti, e potenti, e sacerdoti, e volgar sol che s' insinui negli animi loro un qualsiasi principio di prudenza interessata, prendono tosto a guardarla con diffidenza, con avversione, e la dichiarano di concerto ignorante, ipocrita, eretica, maestra d' iniquità. — Tutto, in lei conforme è l'occhio che la rimira, tutto è grande, e tutto pure si volge a motivo o di sommo disprezzo o di intiera fiducia.

Quanto par grande agli uni in sapienza, in opere ed in virtù, altrettanto agli altri è grande in scelleraggini, e tanto più grande, che lor par raccogliere in mostruosa alleanza e stoltezza e astuzia e austerità e rilassatezza e audacia e ipocrisia, e tutti in uno i vizi più opposti.

La discrezione del suo fare, che la misura al far comune degli uomini, mentre le guadagna la fiducia de' semplici, la mette in sospetto presso i prudenti del mondo e una prudenza peggior della loro.

Il vigore di spirito, onde si accende ad ogni bene, mentre le dà virtù da spiegare all' occorrenza una forza, una fermezza eroica, la fa chiamare ostinata, superba e imbecille.

Si riconosce l' onestà de' suoi costumi, l' utilità de' suoi servizi, ma perchè quell' onestà e que' servizi non s' accordano sempre con certe mire, si dichiara pur pericolosa.

Si sente, che la sua forza è tutta nello spirito e nella parola, ma perchè quella parola turba certe coscienze, perchè quello spirito è efficace, si accusa di sostenere con l' oro, coi cannoni, con l' opera del Demonio.

Strano mistero nella storia umana, se non fosse un solo e medesimo col mistero sì autentico e sì consolante di Gesù Cristo, mistero pieno di luce a chiarire l' indole diversa dello spirito di Dio, e dello spirito mondano.

Perchè Gesù Cristo fu quel tutto di vera sapienza e virtù divina, che rinchiude e concilia ogni principio di verità, di giustizia e di santità, perciò anch' egli parve a certi occhi sì basso e dispregevole, ad altri sì terribile, sì odioso. — Or come in questa sorte furon simili a lui quanti santi, quanti ordini religiosi parteciparono maggiormente al suo spirito ed ai suoi ministeri, e te ne porge sì somigliante esempio la storia de' due più insigni ordini apostolici (1), di S. Domenico e di S. Francesco, co

(1) Impugnati da vari dottori dell' Università di Parigi, singolarmente da Guglielmo di S. Amre. « Dicevasi — che amavano i banchetti dei principi e dei prelati o per far buona vita o piuttosto per nutrire il loro orgoglio dei fumi della vanagloria e soddisfare la loro inclinazione all' intorgarsi e al governare — che si immischiavano nelle cose che più erano ad essi estranee — che si insinuavano in tutti i consigli e in tutte le imprese — che dal Sovrano sino al privato di minimo conto essi volevano dominare sopra tutte le menti, sopra tutti gli ordini di potere — e perciò si rendevano piacenti, lusingatori, direttori facili ed ingegnosi a piegare le leggi della coscienza secondo le loro politiche intenzioni ecc. » Henrion vol. 5, pag. 286, Stor. Univ. — S. Tommaso o S. Bonaventura presero la difesa contro i calunniatori.

patirli oggi per le stesse imputazioni, che allora, e dagli stessi nemici che allora rebbe un trovarsi per niente degenerata da quella che allora era.

Sa ben essa la Compagnia, che molti de' suoi censori l'accoglierebbero con plausi per loro alleata, se sol si piegasse a certe loro idee filosofiche o politiche ben essa, che ove si riducesse a mantenere i suoi usi domestici, l'abito, le osservanze di culto, l'aspetto di una morta reliquia de' secoli passati, potrebbe esser derisa e chiamata inutile, ma non presa a bersaglio di sì fiera persecuzione, com'è stata. Sa ben essa, che ove si desse più esclusivamente o a coltivare certi studii, sono in fiore a questi tempi, o a servire l'umanità in qualche speciale impresa di quelle che son poste dai filantropi d'ogni maniera, potrebbe pur suscitare molte invidie non sarebbe chiamata, com'è, scellerata ed empia.

Ma sarebb'essa savia, o veramente utile ove per queste speranze essa cessasse dal voler essere, quale Dio volle crearla? — Quella parola, che tu ed altri ripeti come espressione dell'ostinazione e della superbia gesuitica, *Aut sint ut sunt, non sint*, (se pur è vero che sia uscita di bocca ad alcun nostro), intesa come potè esser detta dell'essenziale forma dell'istituto è legge di natura, così inviolabile ne' corpi morali, come in qualsiasi cosa creata od increata.

Del resto, come Gesù Cristo non volle aver che fare tra Erodiani o Cesarioniani, Farisei zelatori della giudaica indipendenza, così sta bene che noi ci teniamo lontani da certi sistemi, perchè o precoci od esclusivi non possono mostrar l'impronta di verità, o di bene universale. — Dov'è un diritto dobbiamo rispettarlo, sostenerlo; un abuso dobbiamo adoperarci a ciò che si tolga; dov'è codardia, infondere spavalderia; dov'è discordia, predicare ad ognuno, che dilati le viste ed il cuore per abbracciare in uno co' propri interessi quelli d'altrui.

Così solo sappiamo *mediante le idee e le pratiche religiose*, serbarci *strumento a civiltà*, non perchè altri modi non v'abbiano, ma perchè questo è universale, quello che Gesù Cristo adoperò, ed impose a questa Compagnia.

La nostra vocazione non esclude la tua, nè d'altri, che abbia ad attendere al progresso civile con attivo immediato esercizio de' mezzi naturali, applicati alla istruzione, alle lettere, al commercio, a qualsiasi ramo di pubblica amministrazione, o qualsiasi fonte di privata, o di pubblica prosperità temporale.

Tanto meno la nostra vocazione esclude quella de' Pastori, e d'ogni ministro di Dio, cui s'appartiene di vegliare a ciò che ai mezzi naturali di civiltà presieda la giustizia dell'ultimo fine e la sapienza del Vangelo.

Ma se quell'idea, se quella sapienza affidata al sacerdozio cattolico deve contrastare con le tante passioni sì naturali ad accendersi fra il cozzo degli interessi e delle speranze, di cui la civiltà è propria palestra, non ti sta pur bene, l'addurre sotto pretesto di pace alcuno, che partecipi legittimamente a questa lotta, tanto meno chi vi partecipi, come noi, per uffizio di Apostolato.

Prima di condannarci come perturbatori, come avversi a' felici progressi, una colta generazione è da vedere donde ci vengano queste imputazioni — e se vengono da particolari fazioni impazienti di trionfo, da fazioni anche tra loro discordanti, ma ugualmente in contrasto co' principii universali, perchè ugualmente intese ed esclusive, già le loro imputazioni sono troppo sospette, e non valgono ad altro fuorchè a provare, che noi siamo fedeli al nostro dovere, e così al di sopra di tutte le fazioni estreme, che ognuna ci vede ugualmente a sè stranieri e quasi dati alla legge contraria.

Se tanto non basta a dissipare ogni prevenzione levatasi a nostro danno ricorriamo a cercare ne' fatti quale sia l'ingiuria, quale l'ostacolo con che per noi si con-

Se anche alcun individuo della Compagnia meno attento a starsi all' altezza che gli conviene per giovare al mondo, avesse per avventura mostrato in qualche caso una disposizione di animo meno conciliatrice, meno indipendente da ogni umano influsso, resterebbe a vedere se la Compagnia lo abbia condotto co' suoi propri principî ad urtare alcun bene, o se anzi non disapprovi essa se non deplori qualche atto per cui avvenga, che la condotta d' alcun suo figlio si discosti da quelli.

Intanto però che a discutere il valor de' fatti, o de' principî imputatici serbiamoci a un altro luogo, qui proseguirò a segnalare fra questi contrasti medesimi la meravigliosa e consolante somiglianza che ne torna alla Compagnia di Gesù col divino suo Duce.

Quel medesimo ch' era agli uni così amabile, così adorabile, riuscì a troppi altri molesto censore, perturbatore pericoloso, uomo detestabile, e da dannarsi peggio che i volgari malfattori.

Perchè? perchè prima volle la divina Sapienza, che le ree tendenze dello spirito umano, dessero tale spettacolo di sè, da far inorridire ogni natural senso che manesse al mondo di giustizia e di pudore. — Se alcuno fra i suoi concittadini gli si fosse dato per devoto, se fu pio, se fu generoso, se fu giusto, se ebbe taluno sì felici momenti, che abbia dato saggio di sapienza, e di virtù soprannaturale, ciò fu solo perchè egli infondeva segretamente in que' petti il suo spirito, solo da tanto. — Lasciati a sè, e a se stesso, che i buoni furon deboli — ma chi dava in seno ricetto a un principio d'avarizia, d'invidia, di amor proprio, di malignità, di qualunque passione, dovette naturalmente non amar Gesù Cristo, e lasciato procedere a seconda de' suoi principî dovette giungere ad odiarlo, a volerlo morto.

Or se accade, che anch' essa la Compagnia appaia come Gesù qual segno di contraddizione, non altra è la cagione; non altro l'effetto. Egli è un fatto, che quale fra i buoni Cattolici è più fervente a studiare Gesù Cristo, e a zelare il servizio della sua Chiesa, tale per una simpatia di carità soprannaturale è pur tratto ad amare singolarmente la Compagnia, e a spiegare in favore di lei una devozione più generosa. Perchè lo spirito di Gesù Cristo è lo stesso così nella Compagnia, come in tutti i Cattolici, che professano sinceramente le virtù evangeliche — o sacerdotali. — Qualunque sia il motivo, che sembra talora ingenerare certe ombre di reciproca diffidenza tra uomini di ottimo spirito ed i Gesuiti, ogni ombra si dilegua facilmente e sempre perchè sempre è uno il buono spirito, ed è spirito di pace, spirito di carità disinteressata, spirito, che discerne il bene dov' è.

Che se frattanto così fra i cattolici, come fra gli increduli sono uomini, i quali vanno fino ad odiare dichiaratamente ed a tribolare ed a volere estinta la Compagnia di Gesù, ciò stesso giovando *ut revelentur ex multis cordibus cogitationes*, ne deriva il risultato, che si discerna viemeglio quanto sia diverso il voler il bene secondo la natura, dal volerlo anche secondo lo spirito di Dio.

Perchè alcuni bramosi di spingere l'umanità alla possibile perfezione di virtù e di ben essere, dimenticano per avventura, che nè le facoltà naturali, nè le arti e le scienze qui trovate nel dirigerle od applicarle ai sociali interessi, sono sicura guida, ove si separino dal principio soprannaturale della carità cristiana, loro avviene, che qualunque oggetto, qualunque ramo di civile perfezionamento essi trattino non tardano fra le lor mani a diventare un oggetto di passioni e di gare. Sicchè onde voler compiere un' opera di meravigliosa armonia, qual è una perfetta civiltà, non riescono fuorchè a creare invidie, fazioni, ingiustizie, discordie più o men funeste e scandalose.

Il qual risultamento, chi lo voglia considerare alquanto con pacato animo, gli vale un secondo Vangelo, a persuadergli vieppiù, che ove già creda di voler il bene



gnia sia solita a serbare ira le lotte, che nei moltiforme ministero di salute, e di vil educazione dalla Chiesa affidatole, ardisco di affermare, che quanto l'ardore suoi avversari nel tribolarla rivela le loro occulte passioni, e scredita i lor sistemi come meno conformi alla sapienza evangelica, e al gran principio sociale, che è la verità, altrettanto sarà visibilmente confermato, che la Compagnia procede schiettamente secondo lo spirito di Gesù Cristo, ed è ai popoli maestra degna di fiducia.

Vedo bene, che le fazioni religiose o politiche ambiscono tutte il vanto di esser avute per oggetto di crudele ed ingiusta persecuzione — i nemici della Compagnia non sono gli ultimi ad aver ricorso a questo titolo d'uomini da lei oppressi, spogliati, calunniati. — Ma siffatta smania di onorare la propria causa col noverarne i tesori martiri, comunque riesca a seconda dei calcoli fatti sopra l'umana sensibilità, non basta però ad emulare la *beatitudine* di chi soffre persecuzione *propter justitiam*. L'istinto, che induce il cuor umano a propendere in favore d'un reo sì tosto, che lo vede disarmato e mansueto piegare il collo sotto il colpo della giustizia, — non basta solo ad assolvere o a canonizzare chiunque soffra. Questo istinto non è irragionevole, ma per ciò appunto la ragione deve concorrere con esso a discernere il merito della causa, per cui altri soggiace alla pena.

Dalla croce di Gesù Cristo in qua il patire, e il morire sono cose indifferenti. La pena non è infallibile dimostrazione di reità, nè titolo irrefragabile di gloria, nè d'infamia. — Nè buoni, nè rei possiamo trionfare così del cadere de' nostri avversari, ch'essi non possano parimente trionfare di qualche nostra somigliante sventura. *Putatis, quod hi galilaei, prae omnibus galilaeis peccatores fuerint, quia talem passi sunt? Non dico vobis: sed nisi poenitentiam habueritis, omnes similiter peribitis* — Luc. XIII. 2. 3.

Ma *beati qui persecutionem patiuntur PROPTER JUSTITIAM; beati qui maledixerint vobis homines, et persecuti vos fuerint, et dixerint omne malum adversum vos, MENTIENTES, PROPTER ME*. Matth. V. 10. 11. — Che è ciò che dice Sant'Agostino: *Martyrem non facit supplicium, sed CAUSA*.

Dacchè protestanti, giansenisti, settari, faziosi, ipocriti d'ogni maniera hanno fatto ad invocare la simpatia de' buoni, coll'ostentare i sacrifici fatti per la loro causa, le ferite, le torture, le vessazioni sofferte dalle mani della Chiesa, de' principi, e de' suoi ministri, e simamente dai Gesuiti — non nego, che siasi d'assai scemata la fiducia de' popoli negli atti del potere, e della pubblica giustizia, anzi il buon senso ha meglio imparato a distinguere la colpa dalla disgrazia, il buon diritto dalla vendetta, la bontà dalla forza, la causa dal suo successo. — Ma come più si vadano svolgendo per questa via, tanto meno i principii di pietà, e di giustizia, tanto meno avrà valore l'usurato carattere di martire, se il mondo non lo veda accoppiato alla verità, alla virtù, alla causa giusta di Dio e della Chiesa. Non basterà più il dichiararsi calunniato, sbalzato, oppresso dalla fazione gesuitica, bisognerà darne prove sufficienti di fatto. — Poi quando fatto rendesse la vittima degna di commiserazione, ciò non basterebbe, ma si bisognerebbe a cercare qual è la causa, per cui soccombe, quanto sia giusta, pia, santa, quale il simbolo, quale la legge, quale l'intento, cui siffatti martiri consacrano la vita, e finchè la causa del patire, e ancor del morire, comunque si associi ai nomi di religione, d'umanità, di patria, si ridurrà ad un oggetto più o meno equivoco, più connesso agli affari del mondo, che della Chiesa, più agli interessi di fazione, che non a quelli di Cristo, più a belle teorie, che non alla pratica della carità, della modestia cristiana, i cattolici assennati, e veramente pii non si lasceranno ingan-  
ludere.

fa dalle violenze, o dalle macchinazioni altrui, ma quando occorra rispondere, essa si appiglia al sovrano criterio dell'innocenza; non alla croce sola, ma a Cristo in croce, e mostra ch'essa si sta congiunta *con lui* per la perpetua e strettissima sua armonia con la Chiesa, che patisce *per lui*, per la sua dottrina, per la sua causa, che infine agonizza e perdona *come lui* nella pazienza, nell'umiltà, nello stendere le braccia a chi la perseguita. — Così solo intende di far manifesto che essa soffre *propter justitiam*, e che *mentisce* chi la dice colpevole; e tale dimostrazione suole appagare non che i cattolici, ancora parecchi uomini retti di diversa comunione, che cercano sinceramente le traccie di Cristo.

Ma Cristo non solo patì, perchè la sua santità irritava le passioni, e perchè volle che la rea tendenza di queste si rivelasse cogli eccessi della villà e dell'ingiustizia. — Sì ancora volle patire in qualità di vittima per meritare agli uomini perdono, e sapienza, e virtù, e salute eterna. Or benchè solo Egli abbia potuto esser vittima di tanto merito, anzi il suo merito sia stato sovrabbondante, infinito, sicchè niuno fuori di lui debba o possa offrire a Dio con qualsiasi suo sacrificio alcun merito a salute de' peccatori, senza riconoscere da lui solo la prima ed universale sorgente d'ogni grazia per la salute propria e di tutto il mondo; ciò non di meno a quel modo, che Gesù Cristo comunica ai suoi fedeli ogni cosa sua, così si degna di farli eziandio partecipi della sua qualità di vittime e di salvatori, dando pe' suoi propri meriti qualche valore a qualsiasi misura di patimento indebito, ch'essi offrano in unione della passione di lui alla Giustizia divina in riscatto di chi pecca ed erra.

Nè certo è pel cristiano gloria maggiore. Già sarebbe assai che il suo patire, gli fosse reso sì salutare da valere in isconto de' propri debiti, e ad esercizio di virtù meritorie di vita eterna; già è pur assai per ogni uomo l'esser salvato per la morte d'un Dio. Ma quanto non è più nobile e bella la sorte di poter partecipare al merito di salvatore, con quel patire stesso, che sarebbe condizione di una natura inferma e colpevole? Quanto non è più consolante che glorioso lo sperare di poter rendere a Dio qualche mercede del patire, che ha fatto per noi, soffrendo tanto da concorrere con esso a salvare altre anime, che gli diano gloria nell'eternità?

Deh caro Gioberti, non vietarci una speranza, un ufficio, così legato all'esser nostro di Compagnia di Gesù. Non è qui presunzione, non è vanagloria: io non ci vedo, che quel sommo di carità apostolica, che appartiene alla nostra professione — carità così pura ed eroica, che non è certamente fra noi chi possa vantarsi d'averla raggiunta, ma certo è nostro impegno di emulare guardando a Gesù Cristo.

Ancora odiati, o presi in diffidenza od a scherno, spereremo di non 'esser per anco sì inutili, e tanto meno di sì fatale inciampo alla Chiesa, come tu pensi.

Ti pare, che per guadagnarsi la fiducia degli eterodossi, de' filosofi, degli statisti, e di molte anime belle, che detestano i Gesuiti, la Chiesa li debba toglier di mezzo come oggetto di scandolo, e mostrarsi al mondo separata da un consorzio di Sacerdoti, i quali innocenti o no hanno la sorte di esser fatti oggetto di odio, di derisione, di neri sospetti. Così a te sembra.

Ma oggetto di insulti, e di abominio fu pur Gesù Cristo. — Già ridotto lui all'estrema vergogna, all'estrema impotenza, la sua nascente Chiesa pareva doversi con lui estinguere, se egli tosto non ripudiava da sè un tanto obbrobrio, strappandosi dalla croce, e trasfigurandosi in quella sovrana bellezza, ch'egli è. — Eppure gli parve più degno di sè, più utile al mondo il perseverare in quell'abbiezione sino a compiervi il sacrificio. E allora che, i suoi nemici pareano aver vinto, allora appunto vinceva egli; e più che non avesse fatto prima con le parole sì piene di vita, e co' prodigi

cui era venuto a rigenerarlo pel tempo e per l'eternità.

No, dunque non sarà mai, che la Chiesa debba farsi bella agli occhi de' nemici col ripudiare ogni cosa, che loro paia avvilirla. Non son essi buoni giudici, ciò, che convenga nè a decoro di lei, nè al loro vero bene. Gloria perpetua di lei presentare in sè espressa l'immagine di Cristo umile, paziente, vittima di carità. Primo passo del mondo, de' dotti, de' grandi, de' volgari verso il vero bene è correggere l'orgoglio, venerare la croce, adorare la sapienza e la sorgente d'ogni grazia in un Dio crocifisso. Per ciò la Chiesa non mira ad escludere da sè altra cagione di vitupero, e di pena fuorchè la colpa. Ma finchè non iscorga, la Compagnia fatta colpa indegna della sua fiducia, l'avrà tanto più cara, quanto la vedrà più veramente esprimere in sè il mistero dell'innocenza vilipesa ed immolata.

Vedi adunque, che cosa tu ti voglia quando provochi ad un tempo contro di lei e la Chiesa ed il secolo.

Vedi se il darti la missione di vendicare te stesso di non so qual torto, che a noi abbia potuto farti, avvalorì con carattere evangelico la tua causa.

Ben so dirti, che se è fra i soci della Compagnia di Gesù, chi ti abbia dato qualunque giusto motivo di disgusto, io mi fo per lui mallevadore di quella causa che non si lascia vincere da alcuna vendetta.

Porteremo anzi mali maggiori; nè però vorremo discendere dalla croce. Perchè anche dalla croce speriamo di confermare il nostro apostolato, così a pro delle anime sociali; come ad eterna salute di molti.

*Suppleo quae desunt passionum Christi.* Questo pensiero basta anche solo a nobilitare la nostra condizione, e a sostenerci nelle speranze. Chè dopo rinunziare al mondo e datici a questa professione di vita, non è più nostra speranza o nostra gloria il guadagnare favore umano, ma solo, quanto può esser dato ad uomini degni di rappresentare Gesù Cristo nell'opera della salute del mondo. — Ora com'egli salì al mondo col mistero della croce, così nel dividerne con esso l'ignominia ed i dolori, il diritto è che confidiamo di proseguir con esso, e con tutti i suoi ministri a serbare di questo modo a pro del genere umano que' principi salutarì di carità e di giustizia, di verità e di santità, i quali come soli son sicurtà di ogni maggior bene nella società civile.

Queste speranze non fanno tuttavia, ch'io debba trascurare di darti soddisfazione intorno ai varî torti, cui credi averci ad imputare. — Avrò principalmente in mira il tuo punto capitale che è il nostro essere o no mediante le idee e le pratiche religiose acconcio stromento a civiltà — e perchè ci supponi tanto più funesti a quanto più ci discostiamo a tuo parere dall'indole del Cattolicismo, mi avverrà di dover considerare la Compagnia di Gesù così sotto l'aspetto religioso o morale, e nelle sue attinenze con lo Stato.

### CATTOLICISMO E GESUITISMO.

Quando la somma dell'istituto della Compagnia di Gesù si riducesse a porre alla Chiesa universale un mezzo Apostolico di unità, tra le nazioni diverse, e comune centro; quell'istituto sarebbe dimostrato essenzialmente cattolico, dialettico, però cosmopolitico, epperò italiano, — epperò così in armonia con la costituzione gerarchica de' Pastori, come, se così ti piace, con la tua filosofia, e coi più nobili interessi della nostra patria al primato morale e civile.

Il punto della questione sta ora in ciò, che quell'istituto non sia stato dalle nostre generazioni de' Gesuiti sconosciuto, o abusato a danno del Cattolicismo — per

nostri servizi, fuorchè l'andare noi e ne' principi e della pratica in perfetta armonia con tutto il sistema della Cattolicità.

Tu hai veduto questo estremo nodo — e ti sei dato a discioglierlo col contrapporre in lunghe pagine i pregi, le doti, i titoli, le opere, le tendenze del Cattolismo coi vizii, o le male inclinazioni del Gesuitismo. — Donde hai tratto però quel tuo Gesuitismo sì fazioso, sì sofistico, sì anti-cattolico? Certo non dall'istituto stesso della Compagnia, poichè, quale l'aveva essa professato da S. Ignazio fino alla sua abolizione, tale fu rinnovato intieramente da Pio VII — senza eccezione di parti, e con ammirabile commendarlo altamente. — Certo non da alcun fatto universale, che mostri la Compagnia essere nella massima parte degenerata dall'osservanza di quell'istituto. — Alcuni fatti particolari di recentissima data, nè eran quali li supposevi, nè sufficienti alla dimostrazione di universale corruttela. — Le accuse antiche poi, quand'anco fossero state di fatti veri, e universali, e tutte autenticate col breve di soppressione, il che certo non è, non proverebbero niente contro la Compagnia rinata da soli trent'anni, se non si recano prove della presente sua apostasia dal proprio istituto. — Finalmente la condotta della Chiesa cattolica a nostro riguardo, che è il fatto più universale, e più costante, cui protesti guardare, è lungi dal dare sospetto di disarmonia tra lei ed i Gesuiti, nè dal canto delle dottrine, nè dal canto della condotta.

Donde hai tratto adunque un sì infame Gesuitismo in tutto contrario a ciò che ogni buon cattolico abbia di più caro nella sua religione?

Appunto dalle vecchie imputazioni, in quanto son concepite in modo da applicarsi principalmente a materie piene di mistero e di sospetto, e impossibili a chiarirsi per via di fatti. — Perchè nè la dottrina del tirannicidio, od altra volutaci alcuna volta attribuire, sarebbe più materia di giusta accusa al presente — nè le gare di giurisdizione ci compromettono ora menomamente coi prelati — nè sistemi scolastici dividono da noi sì scandalosamente le Accademie cattoliche. — I confessionali di corte, il commercio delle Indie, i riti Cinesi, le congiure di Londra, le ribellioni di America, non sono più cose da potersi citare, per involgere la Compagnia qual è adesso nella medesima condanna, che già la disperse. — Chi dopo ostinatosi a non voler leggere ciò che pur allora valeva ad assolverla, — potesse credere in coscienza, che allora essa era quel tristo consorzio d'uomini infestissimi alla Chiesa e alla società, non avrebbe però alcuna ragione di farci portare la stessa pena de' nostri padri, finchè per averne ereditato il santo Istituto, non fosse provato anche nella loro sentenza che meritiamo la stessa persecuzione. — Ma se una sì gran parte delle antiche calunnie non ci è più apponibile perchè le circostanze non ci fanno degni di tanta invendia — resta pur sempre un'altra parte, comodissima al trionfo de' nostri avversari. — Ed eccola :

Uomini modesti, e costretti per l'estrema gelosia di ogni fazione contemporanea a limitarsi ne' loro ministeri a quella misura di zelo, che sola salvi la dottrina cattolica, e la legge di Cristo, si chiamino per ciò subdoli, intenti a meditare frodi ed intrighi — si calchi bene questo suggello infamante, e si dicano ipocriti. — Non è miglior sorta di macchia ; — già è la più odiosa — poi si accorda con le virtù dell'accusato, e le volge in male, — essa suppone che il male è troppo bene studiosamente velato e quindi dispensa dal cercarne le prove — più, essa dà per conseguenza il diritto di raccogliere a modo di indizi i fatti accidentali, le più piccole imprudenze degli individui, le apparenze equivoche, per ricavarne una tal quale dimostrazione che sia sufficiente agli occhi del volgo sempre amante di un ragionare che pascoli la fantasia e la sua passione di sospettare bruttezze. — Si alterni col titolo di ipocriti quello di egoisti ; l'uno confermi a vicenda l'altro.

*Pellico.*

pensare.

Ma che non diventeranno di peggio ancora se si rappresenti tutta in corpo Compagnia costituitasi per sistema essenzialmente ipocrita, essenzialmente egoista.

Sotto questo concetto appunto è da raffrontarsi col sistema cattolico.

I Gesuiti siano in comune una scuola, un sistema d'egoismo e d'ipocrisia, sono evidentemente in contrasto con la scuola di verità, e di carità divina che è il cattolicesimo? — Sian ipocriti — e come ameranno la scienza, la filosofia sì a quella della luce? — Ora il cattolicesimo è pur tutta luce di verità, e la scienza, la filosofia non aman di confondere con quella il proprio splendore. — Dunque i Gesuiti sono avversi al cattolicesimo. — Sian pur sol egoisti — ed è certo che la lor mira, il lor principio non può essere, che un loro utile qualsiasi, un utile certamente funesto ad ogni altro. Epperò in contrasto coi generosi promotori del pubblico bene. Ma il cattolicesimo è l'amico del pubblico bene, ed ama le salutari innovazioni, e ne accende il primo ardore e il cace zelo. — Dunque i Gesuiti sono in contrasto col cattolicesimo. — E amma quali han da essere di nera ipocrisia, chi non aspetterà da loro sotterranee trame di vendetta, di rivalità, di persecuzioni infamanti, e più dolorose degli *auto-da-fé*. E non possono essi chiamarsi gli autori di tutto ciò, che accade di colpevole e di deplorabile, o a danzo delle fazioni più opposte tra loro? — Quelle son pur ipocrisie cattoliche — il cattolicesimo è pur una legge di carità — il cattolicesimo detesta l'odio, la vendetta, l'intolleranza. — Dunque i Gesuiti sono uno scandalo nella Chiesa cattolica.

S'incalzi l'argomento e si aggiunga con pari vigor di logica:

Il cattolicesimo è sostanzialmente uno e costante — l'ipocrisia ha mille facce, e si piega a tutti i principj per violarli tutti. — Dunque i Gesuiti non han che far del cattolicesimo.

Il cattolicesimo è progressivo e pieno di immortal gioventù. Ma l'egoismo invecchia il cuore, l'ipocrisia non conosce progressi fuorchè in malizia. Dunque basterebbe che i Gesuiti sono ipocriti ed egoisti e non possono non volere, che tutto intorno a loro sia ignoranza, correzione, silenzio di morte.

E il cattolicesimo avrà altro che fare di cotesta genia perversa e parassita, che strapparsela d'attorno, e abbandonarla a chi ne faccia ragione!

Pur troppo già il cattolicesimo e il gesuitismo fecero causa comune. — Ma il cattolicesimo era ingannato da quell'impostore — ed è tempo, che oramai conceda al mondo di disingannarlo d'un errore sì vergognoso.

Sappia il cattolicesimo, che se esso consente ancora per poco ad affratellarsi col gesuitismo, si troverà gravemente compromesso al cospetto delle migliori anime del mondo — di quelle anime schiette e di nobili istinti, cui l'ipocrisia gesuitica, finché la Chiesa non se ne sia lavata, toglie pur troppo dal riconoscere la pia Madre.

Le anime schiette invero non sanno intendere come si opposti quali sono i principi e di frutti cattolicesimo e ipocrisia, i Gesuiti sian sacerdoti cattolici, benedetti dal Papa, predicatori, missionari, educatori, consiglieri in ogni opera di religione. — Le anime semplici ne argomentano, che dunque i Gesuiti non sono che gli uomini sì intimamente malvagi, e traditori del cattolicesimo. — Ma le anime schiette alla nativa dirittura e bellezza di indole, aggiungono fino discernimento, no, no, la lega del cattolicesimo col gesuitismo, non prova nulla in favore di questo. Perchè posto a modo di principio sopra ogni dimostrazione che il gesuitismo è ipocrita, il cattolicesimo è la sua vittima. Questo non è buon giudice de' suoi ministri, — chi li ha da giudicare sian noi. — Noi che vediamo da lungi, e tanto più da lungi, quanto più da lungi, i segni dell'ipocrisia in tutti i portamenti del gesuitismo.



O se no — sia pace al caro cattolicismo e l'avremo per complice di tutti i mali, che fanno i Gesuiti — l'avremo per complice della nostra dannazione — e avremo ragione di maledirlo eternamente, perchè per odio de' Gesuiti, ci fu impossibile esser cattolici.

Oh! Gioberti! — e tu sei di quelle anime belle, che fanno eco a siffatte mie? E non sai giovare a chi sconosce la Chiesa Madre, se non associandoti a lei quando insultano alla sua sapienza, e alla sua fiducia ne' propri sacerdoti? — E allora speri, ch'essa presenterà di sé bello spettacolo, quando i laici abbiano insegnato ai Pastori a soffocare, a disperdere la Compagnia di Gesù? — E il comun Pastore sarà grato a quel Clero, o a quello Stato, che avrà sì bene servito l'onore di lui, vituperare e annientare que' Gesuiti, ch'egli ama?

Ciò vorresti? — e ciò prima che alcun eterodosso, o miscredente sia obbligato a riconoscere il cattolicismo — o a meglio esaminare la causa del gesuitismo.

Certo ti studii di predicare a chi non ha fede nella Chiesa cattolica, ch'essa è innocente del gesuitismo, che le si è appiccato d'intorno, insinuatosi, come tante altre miserie umane a detorpare il suo seno — perchè il cattolicismo non è i cattolici — il volgo de' cattolici può dilungarsi tanto più dall'eccellenza del cattolicismo, quanto questo è più perfetto e divino. — Onde non è maraviglia, che fra questo volgo si trovino Gesuiti, poichè sono pur altri scellerati d'ogni generazione. — Ma finchè il cattolicismo considerato nella sua dottrina, e per quella istituzione ch'esso è indipendente dagli uomini, non cessa di condannare ogni scelleraggine de' suoi credenti, ed ogni atto in che si discostino dalla fede e dalla legge, che hanno di sua mano accettato, esso non merita rimprovero.

Così tu discorri benissimo. — Ma resta che tu dimostri, che la Chiesa non cessa di condannare o almen di correggere i Gesuiti — resterebbe a provare, che quando alcun Gesuita non corrisponda alla santità delle sue regole, la Compagnia dissimula e le lascia cadere in disuso (1). — Perchè se ai fatti dell'individuo la Compagnia procacci rimedio, essa non è in nulla discorde dalla Chiesa. — O se tutta la Compagnia è in colpa, ossia pe' suoi mali atti, ossia per intrinseca natura, e tuttavia la Chiesa non la corregge, ed anzi, come vedi, lascia credere che le sia cara, tu non hai dimostrato ciò che intendevi; e la tua maniera di difendere il cattolicismo non torna punto a sua lode, nè alla tua. Tu difendi la Chiesa in modo, che risulta o cieco o complice dell'ipocrisia gesuitica — tu stesso diventi partecipe dell'istessa macchia — e se alcuno si allontana dalla via della salute per odio de' Gesuiti, che l'ingombrano, tu vi avrai contribuito.

Oh, caro amico, a me pare, che prima di giungere a tal estremo vorrebbe si tentasse un'altra via. Vorrei cioè vedere un po' più dappresso codesti Gesuiti, e verificare se benedetti come sono dalla Chiesa — siano per avventura innocenti del contrario, che si dice esistere tra essi e lei, tra la loro ipocrisia, e la santità cattolica — tra il loro egoismo, e la carità del Vangelo.

(1) Non vuol dirsi cattiva quella religione in cui accadono difetti, altrimenti non vi sarebbe ordine per santo che sia che fosse buono. Cattiva sarebbe quella religione in cui i difetti fossero impuniti. La Compagnia, grazie a Dio, non tollera difetti e molto meno figli traviatosi dal suo spirito — ha distaccato dal suo seno uomini eziandio d'ingegno e di lettere, Postel, Maimbourg, Raynal, Mascardi, Gresset, il cui addio ai Gesuiti è sì tenero — e avrebbe fatto lo stesso coi Mazarini, cogli Hardouin, co' Berruyer, se le imprudenze e gli errori, che né ancora procedevano al tutto da malizia, non fossero stati da essi ritrattati a tempo e sinceramente. Mentre poi si riconoscono i membri di un ordine per incolpabili di costumi, prender ragione dai fatti particolari di alcuni (che sono sempre eccezioni) a screditare l'ordine intero, quando reo in que' pochi, è modo indegno e sofisticato, sebbene antichissimo: *sophistarum rationes circa accidens maxime omnium sunt*. Arist. *metaph. lib. 6, cap. 2. et Plato apud eundem*.

vidua anch' essa in certa maniera, è luogo eziandio ad un egoismo di consorterie di corpo.

L'egoismo è esagerato amor di sè — chè l'esser sè, ed il vegliare alla propria conservazione, e il tendere alla propria felicità con perfezionare sè stesso, è legge di natura — ed applicata così alla famiglia, ed alla nazione, come all'individuo, principio d'ordine e di virtù. —

Ma l'esagerato amor di sè è vizio capitale e mostruoso e l'esser suo di vizio consiste appunto nel ribellarsi ad un tempo contro la legge più universale stabilita da Dio, e contro i diritti rispettivi delle creature. Perchè l'egoista pretendendo tutto trarre a proprio beneficio ciò, che lo circonda, e rifiutando di servire come parte al ben del tutto, rompe in certo modo, quanto per lui sta l'equilibrio dell'universo.

Nè questo squilibrio morale può stare senza altri sconcerti. Prima esso suppone un errore intellettuale, più minaccia una giusta pena.

L'errore, che partorisce l'egoismo sta appunto nello sconoscere le reciproche dipendenze della parte col tutto, nello sconoscere il dogma cattolico — e rischiude una assurda contraddizione per cui l'individuo si giudica per un canto qual centro dell'universo, e si stabilisce a modo di divinità, cui ogni cosa debba servizio e culto, intanto che dall'altro si giudica divinità sì povera ed impotente, che debba ricever da tutto non abbia che dare senza volerne il prezzo. — Si fa Dio d'un mondo così piccolo. fuori di una certa sfera di relazioni personali, il rimanente è per esso come non fosse.

Ma poichè *per quae quis peccat, per haec et torquetur*, tale assurdità nell'intelletto, tanta esagerazione di amor proprio, che sconcerta le naturali relazioni, possono mai ridursi in pratica senza dolorosi urti, e universale resistenza per parte di ogni creatura. L'ordine comune, la legge universale non si possono violare impunemente. E quando la corruzione degli uomini giungesse a tanto, che tutti sconoscero ogni altra legge fuorchè il privato interesse e l'egoismo, sarebbero puniti disciogliersi della società, e costretti a ridursi a vita selvaggia.

Da questi cenni intorno all'egoismo individuale possiamo far concetto dell'egoismo di corpo, onde sia animata una società particolare.

Se questa è subordinata allo Stato o alla Chiesa l'egoismo la svierà dall'oblio della subordinazione, la farà avara de' dovuti servigi, gelosa di assoluta indipendenza, avida di predominio, di ricchezze, di onore, non senza sconcerto dell'ordine comune.

Se l'egoismo invade tutta una nazione, questo la può guidare a quell'estremo di gelosia, d'isolamento, di superbia, ove piacque alla Cina di concentrarsi. Si trarrà al possibile dalle relazioni usate con la Sede romana. — Non guarderà ai fatti degli Stati vicini — o non manterrà con essi relazioni fuorchè piene di sospetti e puntigli.

Se finalmente scorriamo ancora d'una Chiesa, l'egoismo l'inclinerebbe a scisma dalla Chiesa universale per non voler ricever regola, o star al pari delle altre, quasi avesse in sè onde sussistere e condursi — e la gloria le potesse venir più veramente dalla individualità nazionale, che non dall'unità cattolica.

Così in sostanza l'egoismo d'una società somiglia all'egoismo individuale. — la società componendosi di individui non può essere tutta egoista, se gli individui onde consta non cedono tutti una parte delle loro private pretensioni per amore del comune interesse. — Quindi è che nelle piccole repubbliche democratiche, o nelle litiche fazioni createsi in tempi di fanatismo, l'egoismo di corpo non esclude più virtù generose de' cittadini, o de' congiurati, ma anzi in certo modo le promuove.

società particolare con la società universale.

Prima nuocerà a sè stessa perocchè la generosità de' cittadini mal reggerebbe allo scandalo pubblico d' un egoismo nazionale — e tosto o tardi si leverebbe un privato, il quale applicando logicamente a sè la morale del paese calcolerebbe meglio i suoi particolari interessi a danno comune.

Poi la sua costituzione egoistica offendendo più o meno i diritti delle nazioni vicine, o l' armonia, l' equilibrio de' comuni interessi dell' umana società, ne risulterebbe uno stato di violenza impossibile a sostenersi, finchè non venisse corretto l' intrinseco vizio del nazionale reggimento.

Ma non tutte le società, che si reggono per principî egoisti suppongono pari concorso degl' individui allo scopo comune con volontario sacrificio d' una parte de' propri interessi.

Napoleone avrebbe costituito un governo sovranamente egoista, individuandolo tutto in sè.

Nelle repubbliche aristocratiche può dominare un governo di gelosia e d' isolamento sotto l' influenza d' una classe provinciale.

In questi due casi. la parte maggiore de' sudditi è innocente del vizio, che domina nella condotta delle cose pubbliche — nè vi concorre attivamente se non in quanto coll' osservare le leggi mantiene l' ordine stabilito. Ma allora non è energia cittadina — non arde in petto ad ogni privato amor generoso di patria. — Niuno in quest' ipotesi partecipa all' interesse de' capi, se non in quanto ne spera utile a sè medesimo, o quando è in evidente pericolo l' interesse di tutti.

Questa passività e indifferenza de' sudditi paghi d' un ordine qualsiasi di civil reggimento, è quella, che dà a certi governi eminentemente egoisti, poniamo certi governi dell' antico Oriente, un' apparenza di solidità. — L' obbedienza mantiene pace nell' interno, e fornisce forze da opporre ai nemici di fuori — quindi s' intende, che in questo sistema, giovano le virtù private, giova il procurare al paese una tal qual misura di prosperità, ma non occorrono virtù cittadine, non si esige amor patrio. — Tutta l' energia è nella mente, che regge il fatto, la quale sola calcola i mezzi atti a mantenere, a corroborarle l' assoluta sua padronanza. Ove però venga meno il vigore del capo, tutto il gran corpo può cadere in dissoluzione. — Anzi non v' è riparo se non in quanto o la costituzione civile, o la moralità de' sudditi rinchiudono più o meno elementi di ordine, e di socialità pari di ogni egoismo.

Quanto adunque l' egoismo è esclusivo, ed esagera il principio d' individualità, altrettanto è antisociale e come rende misero l' individuo, così abbrevia l' esistenza delle nazioni, e d' ogni società, che ponga in principio uno smodato amore di sè.

Perciò la sola carità cattolica è perfetto elemento di socialità — e comechè non sia possibile di ottenere, che tutti di concerto la vogliano abbracciare i popoli della terra, e porla in capo alle loro particolari costituzioni, resta però che quella società si abbia per meglio costituita, dove il principio d' individualità non nuoce all' espansione universale. Una società così costituita potrà soggiacere a vari danni ora per difetto di virtù in qualche suo membro, ora per l' ingiustizia degli stranieri; — ma dacchè esclude dal governo di sè quell' esagerata misura di amor proprio, che è l' egoismo, essa potrà riposare sopra la forza dell' esser suo individuo, e sopra quella, che le è partecipata dall' universo cattolico. — Dirò meglio, potrà riposare sopra le leggi dell' ordine universale ed eterno, ch' essa serba anche in mezzo ai contrasti, e che le comunicano una vita di virtù divina.

Ecco dunque le varie ipotesi possibili a farsi di società viziate dall' egoismo — e di società governate dal principio cattolico.



sata a volgere il governo di ogni cosa ad utile suo proprio? O tutti insieme i Gesuiti partecipano sì vivamente al ben esser comune, che fattasi della Compagnia una patria, un loro tutto, all'utile ed alla gloria di quella sacrificino altri principi di carità più espansiva ed universale? Ovvero s'ha finalmente da dire egoistica questa società quasi sia composta d'uomini educati all'egoismo individuale?

Certo può essere chi già pronunzii che per tutti insieme questi motivi, ed forse peggiori.

Ma chi voglia intentare seriamente un'accusa non dee sperare che maggiore surdità le aggiunga peso. Ora sarebbe assurdo e fuor d'ogni possibilità morale un consorzio di egoisti così del pari cupidi, gelosi del proprio privato bene, come del ben comune, tutti abbastanza generosi per conferire attivamente al miglior essere della lor società, e abbastanza vili per lasciarsi in ciò condurre da qualche despota o da tanti ambiziosi di supremo dominio nella chiesa e sul mondo, e tutti contenti di esser da mancipi all'ambizione di pochi capi. — E questi capi educati prima tutti da mancipi a voler che imparino a farsi terribili ai papi ed ai re; — e fatti capi di quel genere di schiavi, fatti tiranni dei loro fratelli, saper confondere i propri coi loro interessi, ma però quegli schiavi trovar mai che invidiare, che odiare, che punire ne' loro superiori, ma far tutti, come si vede, un cuor solo ed un'anima sola, mi pare che da un punto di vista più con quel tanto che seguirebbe più oltre da un principio di egoismo, il quale pervenisse tutto del pari e il corpo e le singole membra, e i sudditi e i superiori, chiude tante contraddizioni che a supporle attuate tutte insieme nella Compagnia, verrebbe collocare i Gesuiti non già fra gli ordini delle cose umane, nè pur fra le cose diaboliche, ma fuori d'ogni ordine de' possibili.

Che se in una società umana concorrono di concerto l'egoismo del Despota, l'egoismo de' Magnati, l'egoismo patrio e democratico, l'egoismo personale, a mantenerla, a mantenerla interi secoli, anche in mezzo ad urti sì violenti, come quelli che si fanno con mosse costantemente contro la Compagnia — convien pur dire che gli interessi personali, ed i comuni, e quelli de' capi, e quelli del Duce sovrano, sono al possibile bilanciati sicchè per niuna parte l'esagerazione sia punto notabile. — La qual ipotesi porterebbe che e quel Despota non sia tanto egoista da offendere i diritti e gli interessi comuni, e que' Magnati non sian tanto egoisti da non rendere con pari fedeltà i loro servigi e al capo ed alla repubblica, e lo scopo comune così de' capi, come de' privati sia un bene da potersi partecipare a tutti, e il concorrere che tutti facciano a questo scopo con sincerità ed impegno a questo scopo non sia senza un tal grado di generosità, da moderar convenientemente l'egoismo di ciascun privato.

Resterebbe dunque a vedere se una società la quale riesce a moderare nell'intimo governo l'egoismo personale de' capi, e de' subordinati, possa rinchiudere un principio di egoismo comune, così potente da contrastare per tre secoli, per quel tanto di tempo che si dice fatta egoistica la Compagnia, contro il principio di carità cattolica.

Non si troverà una tempra d'uomo, in cui siano convenientemente equilibrati gli umori, sano il corpo, moderate le passioni, la quale per ciò stesso non sia possibile. Dovunque regna un principio d'ordine e d'amore, è proporzionata convenientemente con l'ordine universale, e con la cattolica filantropia. La disarmonia tra una società particolare ben regolata, e la società universale non è possibile se non quando si persevera in un'illusione, per cui avvenga che alcuni uomini si accordino nel volere qualche reo fine. Ma nè questo accordo nel volere un reo fine può perseverare lungo tempo senza corrompere l'intimo essere di quella società istessa, dando luogo

mira antisociale, e volte per immenso egoismo a procacciarsi un utile, che offende i diritti altrui, e rovina il principio cattolico? Mi pare, che a concepire possibile, anzi acceso e perseverante l'egoismo si vuole supporre un'esca. E l'egoismo essendo un amor di sè fuori di regola, quell'esca non può essere di quelle onde si pasca l'uomo savio, non può essere un vero bene, ma uno degli infimi che stuzzicano le passioni, un bene mondano. E l'egoismo gesuitico essendo meno un esagerato amor dell'individuo per la propria persona, che non un eccessivo amore della Compagnia sopra ogni altra società a quella straniera, converrà supporre a questa passione un oggetto proporzionato così, che abbia bastevole apparenza da alimentare il desiderio, la speranza, l'ardore d'ogni Gesuita, e tuttavia non abbia valore reale agli occhi della fedeltà della ragione, ma sia bene di terra, sia pura vanità, sia un veleno all'anima.

Ora qual sarà esso mai?

La sovrana dominazione, si dice tosto; l'esaltazione della Compagnia sopra tutti i corpi religiosi, sopra tutti i corpi insegnanti, sopra tutto il corpo de' Pastori, sopra tutti i Principi, sopra tutta la Chiesa.

Ma a vedere se di fatto i Gesuiti si pascono di quest'esca comune, e o sia per l'istituto, o per attuale loro deviamiento dell'istituto primiero, si sian proposta una smisurata ambizione per principio del loro concorde operare, convien raccogliere dati, onde ciò si possa plausibilmente argomentare.

Quanto a me, conscio come sono di me medesimo, e della condotta, e de' sensi de' miei fratelli, e dei miei superiori non potrei davvero occuparmene seriamente.

Odi tu ciò, che ignori. — Sono stato due anni novizio, ad udirmi inculcare, con me a tutti i compagni il modesto concetto, che il Gesuita deve avere di sè e della religiosa società, di cui si fa membro. — E quel concetto datoci a meditare sopra le proprie parole di S. Ignazio, ci riduceva a considerare la Compagnia come la scuola di umiltà primieramente, e di povertà rispetto a ciascun individuo, scuola di carità vicendevole tra i suoi figli; e il fine di questa scuola, e tutto l'essere della Compagnia terminarsi a mantenere tra le mani della Chiesa e de' suoi Pastori un docile stromento a quel maggior bene, che sia da farsi dove che vogliano ad istruzione degli ignoranti, a consolazione de' tribolati, a ravvedimento de' peccatori, a trionfo della fede cattolica, a salute del mondo.

Si lo confesso, queste mire così pure e disinteressate, mi innalzavano l'anima e mi davano un vigore non prima sentito. — E quel vigore, quella grandezza mi pareano acquistare tanto maggior consistenza, quando mi vedea circondato di tanti giovani eroi, pieni anche essi de' medesimi sensi, e più robusti di me, e troppo più in grado di fornirsi per via di accurata educazione d'ogni dovizia di sapere e di virtù corrispondere all'alta vocazione.

Quel nobil senso, che ingrandisce l'anima a chi novera tra i suoi antenati lunghe generazioni di uomini illustri, e stimola a mantenerne la gloria, non è ignoto, al Gesuita; e ognun di noi, ravviva questo senso con tanto maggior diligenza che si tiene in debito di emulare in valor di dottrina, in santità di opere, in generosità di sacrifici, una schiera immensa di eroi; e queste glorie le ricordiamo, e intendiamo di emularle, con tanto maggior franchezza di cuore, senza temerne assalto di vana gloria, o di ambizione, quanto que' nostri Padri, e le regole, che ci han da formare degni di loro, ci inculcano del pari umiltà sincera, schietto disinteresse, perpetua dipendenza, carità generosa, efficace, universale, lungi da ogni speranza di onori ecclesiastici, lungi da ogni prospettiva di gloria mondana, senza lusinga di applausi domestici, senza riposo fino al sepolcro.

Come fui educato, così ebbi ad educare dappoi altri novizi — e per sei anni co-

desina umiltà; generosa sì, ma generosa appunto perchè sincera, e vinota d'ogni  
simo — generosa perchè simile a quella di Cristo — generosa, perchè concepita  
pura carità di Dio e degli uomini, rispetto a' quali e ognun di noi, e tutta la Compagnia  
non dee tenersi per altro fuorchè per istromento di salute in qualsiasi ministero  
abbietto, o più faticoso, in cui piaccia a Dio di impiegarsi.

Nè fui avuto per singolare riformatore. — Così s'insegnava prima di me,  
bramavan da me i Superiori, così vuole l'Istituto, così si pratica in Roma — e con  
quel sì terribile Arsenale di *Montrouge*, in quella scuola di diplomatici e di co  
lori collegati ad invadere il mondo, avresti udito ragionare tra sè ed educarsi  
ambiziosi appunto, quali vedi sostenere parte l'Apostolato degli ospedali, delle  
ri, o delle scuole in Europa, parte le Missioni d'Algeri, della Siria, del Madagascaro  
la Cina, e dell'estremo Nord di America.

Perocchè non invano s'imbevono i novizi di questo spirito 'di zelo umile e  
neroso, non per iniziarli quindi a brutto egoismo — anzi appunto perchè non sia  
fra loro altra gara fuorchè di crescere e segnalarsi in quella virtù Apostolica, per  
solo e non per altro la Compagnia può darsi alcun pregio nella Chiesa.

E quale sarà infatti il grado di Gesuiti, che da quelle virtù già sì nobili, e  
ficaci ad ingrandire, ad appagare il cuore, venga sublimato alla scuola arcana  
l'egoismo?

Solo superiore perpetuo ed assoluto, come si dice, della Compagnia è il Ge  
nerale; solo egli adunque potrebbe essere il grande egoista, che tutti calcola  
rige i movimenti de' suoi subordinati allo scopo di universale dominazione.

I Provinciali no, perchè non costituiscono punto un'aristocrazia, ma son su  
ti immediati del Generale, senza reciproca relazione fra loro, nè comunità d'int  
si, nè partecipazione alle consulte ordinarie — e chi è ora Provinciale tornerà  
poco semplice confessore in fondo ad una Chiesa, senza alcun pro alla sua persona  
le fatiche spese per comune servizio.

Tanto meno si confà al comune de' professi l'essere animati di egoismo a  
della Compagnia. — Essi sono i più poveri, i più stanchi, i più lontani da ogni  
sione della vita, i più dati alle semplici opere del ministero, i più impegnati a s  
nere con l'esempio la generosità de' giovani — e tolti al più tre per Provincia  
no di loro suole avere incombenza di Superiore — onde tutto il loro partecipare  
vamente al governo della Compagnia si riduce al tempo della Congregazione  
debbasi radunare per l'elezione del Generale, o quando egli li chiami a straordin  
Consulta.

Non è dunque possibile altro sistema di egoismo gesuitico, se non quello  
tutta la Compagnia, come una milizia d'uomini disinteressati, obbedienti, gene  
renda perpetuo e volontario servizio ad un capo, il quale solo possieda l'em  
segreto del doversi egli, in quest'esercito, innalzare ad universale dominazione  
Che se come vedremo tosto, nè anche il nostro Generale, anzi meno egli, che  
uomo al mondo si trova in grado di concepire un disegno sì ambizioso, resterà  
ricorriamo all'ipotesi, per cui si finga la Compagnia come una repubblica dem  
tica, dove ogni particolare concorre e partecipa alla Sovranità.

Ho dunque da parlare del nostro Generale? Chi conosca alquanto dappres  
P. Roothaan, certo non abbisogna, ch'io gli commendi la modestia, la religion  
schietta ed illuminata virtù, con che egli rinnova solo da sè ogni sospetto di ego  
o d'ambizione. — Se tu ne porti altro concetto, ogni legge di pudore mi vieta  
discendere ad alcun tribunale il mio Padre, un uomo, cui già la miglior parte  
Chiesa ha reso giustizia.

Dirò bensì, che il Generale de' Gesuiti non è mai un uomo educato in

avea prima da farlo buon suddito, ad ogni servizio di carità tra i fanciulli, tra i poveri, tra i contrasti, che il Ministero Apostolico deve incontrare dal mondo, nè v'ha altra scuola, od altro merito, che lo conduca a poter quindi portare le infermità di tutti i suoi fratelli, e diventarne il Padre, e guidarli e sorreggerli fra le quotidiane battaglie a gloria di Dio.

Aggiungerò che il Generale non sale per sua abilità a conquistare l'autorità suprema, nè viene eletto da altri fuorchè da coloro, che hanno maggiori motivi di volerlo ottimo per ogni virtù di padre, e di sincero religioso. — Che forzato ad entrare in carica, giacchè l'Istituto vieta di rifiutarla, non può mai operare così a suo arbitrio che non debba aver riguardo e al Papa da un canto, il quale lo tiene sotto la sua mano, e dall'altro alla Compagnia, che lo consiglia, lo sorveglia, lo può deporre.

Finalmente domanderò a chi voglia riflettere, qual utile può godere in questo mondo il Generale de' Gesuiti? quali dignità nella Chiesa? qual potere temporale qual uso dell'oro, sicchè o sia tentato di cupidigia nel guidare gli atti della sua Compagnia, o abbia da educarla contro il suo Istituto ambiziosa e superba, per esserne egli il servo più infelice?

Rimane adunque il solo supposto, che in ogni Gesuita risieda intimo quello spirito d'ambizione e di egoismo, non pur personale, ma per l'esaltazione comune di tutta la Compagnia.

Veramente sotto un despota interessato non potrebbe fiorire in seno a tutti i sudditi un'obbedienza generosa. Là ove tutti son pronti alla fatica, ai sacrifici, là dove son paghi tutti di starsi tra loro in perfetta uguaglianza, senza guardare nè a propri comodi, nè al proprio onore dee ardere per avventura un principio repubblicano — e in quanto vogliam supporre, che i Gesuiti rivolgono quella loro sì spontanea attività a un comune interesse, che offende i diritti della società universale, non potranno dunque essere eguisti, se non a modo d'una repubblica democratica e terrodossa.

Or bene egli è un fatto, che per quanto si voglia mutata la Compagnia da quella che fu istituita, in questa parte però ferma alla sua primitiva Costituzione è fra tutte le Società religiose, la più lontana dal principio democratico. e posa sopra la monarchia più assoluta, senza altro temperamento fuori del consiglio di pochi assistenti, e della Congregazione straordinaria.

Che cosa dunque può accendere a virtù generose, e collegare in comune intenti tutti i Gesuiti, se non è in loro il principio democratico? Qual utile personale sarà vantaggiato dal loro servire sotto l'obbedienza d'un Capo? — E quando tutta insieme la Compagnia, o si dilatasse maggiormente, o crescesse in gloria, e ognun uo sperasse alcun suo pro, come potean nascere e fomentarsi queste speranze dal voto di povertà, di obbedienza perpetua, che son pure i primi stimoli alle opere più belle del Gesuita? In somma a parlare umanamente una passione non si accende per alcun oggetto, se non può lusingarsi di poterlo conseguire — non può tendersi se lo ignora — non può vagheggiarlo se non ne spera la propria soddisfazione — eppure nell'ipotesi cui siam costretti a ridurci, il grande scopo della dominazione universale è ardentemente voluto da tutti i Gesuiti, in tanto che devono pur ignorarlo tutti quelli che hanno da adoperarvisi con maggior fatica. — Niuno nè può godere nè anche in speranza, ossia perchè l'ignora, ossia perchè non ha apparenza di possibile — tanto meno può abbagliare alcuno, perchè, fosse anche possibile il conseguirlo fosse possibile il proporlo alla mira di tutti i Gesuiti, quella parte che n'è sempre sensi presi in noviziato, ed è la più attiva alle fatiche, la più immolata, si rivolterebbe tuttavia all'idea d'un fine così mondano, così al disotto di quello, per cui

risio anne di aspirare a dominazione, non troverebbe in questa un pascolo  
spondente alla naturale cupidigia, finchè non rallentasse maggiormente i vin  
obbedienza, di povertà, di carità fraterna, di religioso decoro, che pur fin qui  
conoscono da noi inviolabilmente mantenuti, e a cui saremmo richiamati inces  
mente dalla coscienza, dalle Regole, dalla Chiesa che ha sopra di noi gli occhi  
mano, dal mondo stesso col suo zelo per la nostra santificazione.

Veramente adunque l'egoismo gesuitico è un'ipotesi, che non ha apparenza  
verità ossia, che si applichi al nostro Istituto qual esso è, ossia che si applichi  
fatto della comune nostra condotta.

Or pertanto vo' prender io a spiegare donde avvenga, che un Istituto tu  
carità cattolica, un Istituto dove coll'affezionarvisi il Religioso impara meg  
amare i sacrifici, e a giovare ai prossimi possa essere sospettato, accusato  
egoismo eccessivo, superiore a qualunque smisurata ambizione mondana. Ciò a  
appunto perchè non è oggetto d'ambizione mondana quello, che possa acce  
tanto impegno alla fatica, allo studio, ai sacri ministeri, come, per grazia di  
vede tuttora nella Compagnia.

Che cosa posson volere ci va domandando il mondo, che cosa posson vole  
testi uomini sì ardenti, sì costanti che spendono prima lunghi anni in solitari  
in prove durissime d'annegazione e d'obbedienza, poi escono a spandersi dov  
loro si apra un adito, senza guardare a stenti di viaggi, senza paventare i cont  
senza respingere i disprezzi fuorchè perseverando, nè tuttavia agognando di d  
con noi nulla di questa terra paghi a dir vero del necessario al vitto ed allo studi  
Certo se l'uom ragionevole propone alle sue operazioni un scopo, ai suoi sacrifici  
provento, questi non son uomini che si contentino come noi di poco. Ma questo  
che vorremmo noi, che cosa lascia a supporre più oltre? noi lavoriamo per l  
un patrimonio quanto è possibile più ampio ai nostri figli; noi vogliam comp  
degnamente sopra i nostri rivali; quale di noi aspira a un posto onorato, qual  
tende conseguire autorità nel governo — ma ci limitiamo per lo più al proprie  
resse, e chi è proprio generoso abbraccia con l'affetto, e promuove con l'opera  
muni interessi di patria. — Che posson però volere costoro che non han patri  
famiglia, nè interesse personale? Convien pur intendere, che lor famiglia, lor  
è la lor Compagnia — questa dunque, s'intende, devono essi voler arricchire  
sta innalzare, questa estendere dappertutto — all'utile di questa subordinare le  
glie, gli Stati, la Chiesa. Certo, appunto perchè il Gesuita par tanto meno di no  
lecito di quelle cose, cui rivolgiamo le nostre mire, conviene ch'egli sia l'uom  
avido, più ambizioso, più egoista; il suo egoismo ha da essere tanto più im  
quanto per l'esser suo di Gesuita egli s'investe degli interessi comuni di tutti  
soci; — e quel comune contender di tutti i soci ha una mira, che non è la n  
non può essere che a nostro danno — non può essere che una cospirazione c  
l'utile nostro, contro l'invulnerabilità delle nostre famiglie, contro la libertà dell  
stra patria. Così il mondo.

Povero mondo, che non vede più oltre. — Povero mondo, che non ci pu  
porre mire diverse dalle sue, se non partendo dal medesimo suo principio d'int  
e di ambizione. — Povero mondo, che con tanto orrore dell'egoismo gesuitico  
disce il suo proprio, mostrando di non saper concepire, come altri si faccia p  
ed umile e generoso fuorchè per più eccessiva cupidigia. — Povero mondo, s  
io, perchè quanto a te, caro amico, ed ai tuoi pari, che siete sinceramente app  
nati per la morale cattolica, non maledite l'egoismo gesuitico se non perchè, s  
sto, ch'esso sia, certo è degno oggetto di odio e di abbominio — certo contra  
vostri generosi disegni — certo è da mondarne la Chiesa.



giorno in cui potesse avvenire, che il nostro operare si discostasse in una maniera sì orribile dalla dottrina di Gesù Cristo. Fin qui intanto questa dottrina è l' unica nostra Regola. — Di qui impariamo a spogliarci d' ogni bene di terra per dividerlo tra i poveri e crescere il numero degli Apostoli. — Di qui impariamo a non temere nè i dispreggi, nè le violenze del mondo. — Di qui impariamo a tenerci stretti a vicenda in fraterna carità, in generosa obbedienza. — Di qui lo zelo per l' unità cattolica, per la propagazion della fede, per l' osservanza della legge. — Deboli veramente come siamo al pari degli altri uomini non sapremmo sostenerci in tanto contrasto con la propria natura, con gli esempi del mondo, con la sua potenza, se altri interessi, altra gloria non reggesse le nostre speranze. — Ma queste reggon ferme sopra la parola di Cristo. — Quanto ci saprai dire, che sia conforme a quella, o te lo ispiri l' amicizia, o l' odio, o tu ce lo dica in forma di esortazione, ovvero di anatemi, l' avremo per buono del pari, e tutto concorrerà a meglio rassodarci nel medesimo impegno di seguire il comune Maestro e di servire a lui solo. — Ma se tu confondi il linguaggio di lui con quello della morale mondana — e ci chiami colpevoli o stolti, perchè sovrastiamo alle mire temporali della civiltà, le tue parole cadranno invano, o avranno posto alla bramata felicità della patria una base rovinosa, da prolungare la necessità de' nostri Ministeri, finchè la morale di Cristo non sostenga sola le virtù cittadine e private.

No, non ti sdegnare del mio supporre che sia mai necessario il nostro ministero a qualsiasi pro di Cristo o degli uomini.

— Quando ci fai la carità di ricordarci, che gli uomini furono per secoli e secoli senza Gesuiti, e che gli Apostoli non eran Gesuiti, ed i Gesuiti non sono nè Vescovi, nè Parrochi, — nè però parte essenziale o costitutiva della Chiesa, nè depositari della fede, nè sorgente della giurisdizione pastorale, nè stromento necessario alla grazia del Salvatore, — noi non guardiamo tanto allo stile, con cui ti esprimi, quanto alla verità delle cose — e come le riconosciamo tutte vere, ed importanti ed antichissime godiamo in udirle da te, d' aver un' occasione di più di prestar loro esplicito assenso con tutto l' ossequio dell' anima. — Non aver a male però, che noi teniamo cara la necessità, che la Chiesa fin qui ci impone di mantenere il nostro Istituto, di servirla a norma di quello in ogni nuovo conflitto, ch' essa abbia col mondo.

Non noi infatti ci siamo imposti alla Chiesa, ma essa ci ha imposto una parte del ministero sacerdotale. Or va' dunque ad ammonire la Chiesa, che de' soli Pastori si deve essa giovare, de' vescovi, de' chierici, di tutti gli ordini Religiosi, se vuole, ma de' Gesuiti no — perchè non sono necessari. — Allora, ch' essa ci dispensi da faticare in nulla, cesserà il dovere, che finora ci stringe — e non vedremo più necessità per noi, nè per altri, che stia in piedi questo nostro sodalizio.

Ma sarà nostra colpa se tuttavia la Chiesa ci ama, e ci difende? Sarà nostra colpa se le ire, che minacciano la Compagnia si hanno da parecchi Pastori per ingiuriose alla Chiesa, e foriere di più sacrileghe violazioni de' suoi diritti? Singolar delitto veramente l' esser tenuti cari, da chi tuttavia dovrebbe conoscerci meglio per molesti rivali, o indiscreti amici. O se talvolta la plebe è più commossa che non il Pastore a pietà de' Gesuiti, sa ben egli come la debba moderare, senza darcene colpa. Che tutti in uno e Pastori, e Gesuiti, e semplici cristiani, tutti sappiamo, che la Compagnia non è, come l' ordine Pastorale, essenziale all' esistenza della Chiesa Cattolica, ma è cosa appartenente a lei, e cui essa sola può apprezzare a norma dell' utile, che ne aspetta. E tutti diremo egualmente, che il diritto della Chiesa è così violato nell' oltraggio che si faccia ai Gesuiti, come il diritto d' un cittadino, ove altri metta la mano sopra la sua roba. Nè qualunque sia la fiducia, l' amore della Chiesa verso la Compagnia, mi pare che questa ne abusi.

teresse di Gesù Cristo e delle anime? e ancora per penetrare ne' più schifosi asili l'umanità sofferente e degradata, accade mai per noi si offenda il diritto o il merito di chi ne ha cura? Certo se alcuno è fra i ministri ecclesiastici, il quale abbia avuto a soffrire molestia per l'indiscrezione di qualsiasi Gesuita la Compagnia sarà sempre pronta a dargliene soddisfazione, ma niuno vorrà, che la colpa dell'individuo sia fatta per vizio comune. Il comun nostro sentire ed operare è quello d'uomini decisi alla fatica, non come necessarii a niente, ma pronti ad accorrere dovunque o chiamati, o siam lasciati liberi di prestare i nostri servizi. — Non intendiamo che i bisogni della Chiesa ci rendano mai necessarii, ma che impongano a noi necessariamente di concorrere coi suoi ministri e fedeli a giovarle in ciò, che ci voglia ordinare. — Non pretendiamo di violare l'ordine della Gerarchia, per usurpare ciò che non ci appartiene, ma il dovere affidatoci di servire dovunque siam mandati in aiuto de' Pastori ci impone la necessità di amare questo nostro Istituto, e di abbracciare come proprii gli interessi di tutta la Chiesa universale. —

Vedi se tu possa sgravarci di questa necessità; ma deh! non chiamarci superbi, nè egoisti. Così superbi infatti altra volta, così egoisti, da averle mani ogni maniera di buone opere in servizio degli spedali, delle carceri, delle scuole, che torto era il nostro, se trovavamo libero ed aperto il terreno senza chi contendesse! L'opera dei nostri Padri suscitò lo zelo di molti; questo bene si può proseguire senza di noi; sarà superbia il desiderare che almeno chi vi attende Dio non ci respinga con gelosa diffidenza? ovvero non sarà degno d'uno zelo zelante il rallegrarci d'aver avuto imitatori, che ci sottentrassero in quelle prime imprese, e il tenerci apparecchiati a qualunque altra maniera di giovare dove meno corrano i cooperatori? Ma se un po' di zelo è superbia, è essa superbia del soldato che sente il suo dovere, ed averlo caro? — è esso egoismo l'aversi per debitore di tutti?

So bene che anche l'amore del proprio Istituto può essere spinto fino a ribelle, ingiusta esagerazione. — Ma se per sorte può accadere, come ce ne avvisano gli antichi Padri del Monachismo, che alcuno sogni non esser fuori del suo chiostro il più santo, la condizione del Gesuita non è tanto esposta a siffatta illusione. Egli è tutt'odì nel vasto campo della Chiesa, non esser già egli il solo, nè il più valente dei servi di Dio, ma Dio crearsi perpetue generazioni di Santi, e amplissima varietà di Istituti, cui la Compagnia è troppo onorata di poter emulare.

Nè tuttavia queste riflessioni sono lasciate a farsi da ciascheduno secondo la misura della sua modestia. — Ma perpetuo è fra noi l'udirsi a ripetere ora a noi S. Ignazio, ora con le parole dei nostri Generali, ora da Colui che in ogni caso ha l'ufficio di ricordarci i nostri doveri: non valerci l'eccellenza dell'Istituto, se non professiamo con umiltà sincera; non valerci le sante opere de' nostri Padri, se non emuliamo con pari purità di zelo; e fra tutti gli Ordini Religiosi, esser il nostro che degli ultimi a ragion di età, ma impegnato per antica tradizione a sostenere i diritti di ciascun di loro all'ossequio ed alla gratitudine del popol cristiano.

Per me ti confesso, ch'io amo quest'Istituto nostro con la più speciale predilezione, appunto perchè vi trovo in vigore questo spirito. — Ma qualunque sia la causa degli spiriti, è mai colpa la predilezione che un Religioso professi alla regola che gli ha creduto di dover abbracciare? — Se questa è colpa, chè certo sarebbe da escludere la stima dovuta a qualsiasi altro ceto o persona, se questa è colpa, fra le più innocenti, e nata da un affetto per sè lodevole. — Ma se è luogo a gra-

quella patria, dove tutti omai si concentrau i suoi diritti, e le più sante speranze.

Perchè ha egli abbandonato il suo patrimonio? Perchè ha dato luogo ad altra nella carriera che avrebbe potuto percorrere? Perchè ha egli rinunciato al mondo? Non certo per cercare una via da rientrarvi con nuova ambizione. — Ma se ha da rimanere fedele nella professione più singolare d'una virtù disinteressata, e superiore alla metà comune, non dovrà egli amare sovra ogni altra cosa la società di coloro presso i quali trova sostegno e norma al generoso intento? Niuno ama altra madre più che la sua; niuno conosce altra patria fuori di quella nel cui seno sia nato, ed abbia ricevuto educazione, tutela, cittadinanza. — Or bene, così fa il Religioso, quando senza offender alcun diritto d'altri con cui sia in relazione, egli onora di filiale predilezione il proprio Istituto.

Quanto poi questo senso è legittimo, altrettanto giova felicemente a mantenere in ciascun ordine religioso l'emulazione dell'osservanza. A quel modo che l'amore domestico e di patria sono dolce stimolo ad ogni virtù sociale, appoggio alle leggi, sorgente di pubblica prosperità, così una pia predilezione che ogni religioso concepisca in favore del proprio Istituto lo manterrà fedele ai suoi doveri, e per quella ogni ordine splenderà in quella forma di virtù che gli è più propria; il che è pur il meglio che tu possa esigere così dal Gesuita come dal Monaco, per giovar quindi ciascuno giusta il suo debito alla Chiesa ed allo Stato.

Nè di alcuno, meno che del Gesuita è a temersi, che per l'affetto all'Istituto proprio sia tratto a dimenticare, a soffocare la carità cattolica, per rinchiudere i suoi interessi tra i confini della sua Compagnia.

Ogni cosa fra noi mira anzi a farci intesi al servizio altrui — non già a restringere il pensiero od il cuore al solo andamento delle cose domestiche.

La direzione, che riceviamo dalle nostre regole e dai nostri maggiori, così nella pietà, come nella scienza, così all'esercizio delle facoltà naturali, come alla pratica delle virtù evangeliche, tutta è rivolta studiosamente allo scopo di concorrere con Gesù Cristo, e sotto la mano de' sacri Pastori a procacciare l'eterna salute e la presente consolazione a quanti più possiamo.

Mai pertanto non saremo men cupidi d'alcun bene di terra, mai non saremo più cattolici per ampiezza di cuore, ed efficacia di carità universale — se non quando appunto saremo più veramente Gesuiti. — Nè da noi potresti avere miglior sicurtà che escluda ogni sospetto, ogni pericolo di egoismo, fuorchè il vederci ognora meglio affezzionati alla Compagnia di cui siam figli, amate le sue regole, riverito da noi il suo Magistero, caro a ciascun Socio il consorzio, l'amicizia de' suoi fratelli.

Ma non è una sorta di egoismo quell'indipendenza che i Gesuiti paion pretendere nel loro modo di reggersi e di operare? Non vantano infatti un nuovo gius per loro? una costituzione che non si piega a nulla? immunità, privilegi, esenzioni da ogni legge comune dello Stato e della Chiesa?

Io voglio, o caro, tutta rimetterne la risposta a te, come a quello ch'io credo fra quanti ci fan da giudici, volere usare in questa parte con maggior imparzialità.

Tu non sarai per far eco nè a giudici interessati, od incompetenti, nè a pretese esagerate di chicchessia. Vuoi ordine nello Stato, giusti confini alle giurisdizioni, e vita, e libertà di regolar movimento a qualsiasi forma di società particolare, qualsiasi individuo che guarentisca dal canto suo rispetto alle leggi, ed utile servizio secondo la misura de' suoi mezzi.

Dal canto suo la Compagnia riprova qualsiasi indiscrezione, onde sia mai accaduto a qualche Socio di trasgredire i termini dell'obbedienza, che essa riconosce dovuto ad ogni legittima potestà intorno alle cose, che appartengono alla sfera di ciascuna.



nirla in astratto senza riguardo a luoghi o a tempi — e ridurre a questi termini generalissimi.

« Un Ordine regolarmente costituito dall' autorità del Capo della Chiesa, può  
« so mantenersi, e voler operare nella Cristianità a norma della sua costituzione.  
Assolutamente parlando, certo che sì. Nè può meglio rendere i dovuti servizi  
alla Chiesa ed ai popoli, fuorchè conservandosi qual fu creato, operando conforme  
agli è prescritto. A questa sola condizione si chiamerà fedele ed utile. — Col violare  
perderà l' essere suo proprio, confonderà i fini de' diversi Istituti, non procurerà  
Chiesa il fine voluto da lui in particolare.

Ora questo principio scioglie anticipatamente parecchie altre questioni.

Poniamo questa : « Un Ordine religioso voluto introdurre dalle Autorità locali  
« ne' loro confini, accettato nel suo essere quale fu dapprima costituito, od introdotto  
« tosi nella sua forma propria col favor delle leggi comuni ha egli diritto di rimanere  
« si ivi quale fu accettato e di godervi il favor delle leggi finchè le rispetta ? »

Certo sarai giusto abbastanza per rispondere di nuovo che sì. Poichè, prima  
l' introduzione d' un Ordine religioso in un luogo particolare si effettua col consenso  
delle Autorità, quella è un vero contratto, da dover esser saldo fino al termine per  
so — od in perpetuo, tolto che una parte o l' altra manchi alle condizioni stabilite.  
Ma la condizione stabilita ad un Istituto religioso nel dargli stanza in un paese  
appunto che sia ciò ch' esso è, e tale rimanga quale fu dapprima voluto — salve  
ve convenzioni da trattarsi all' occorrenza con pari libertà e giustizia.

Che se introdottosi da sè pel comun diritto, che gliene offrano le leggi locali  
non ha contratto speciali obbligazioni oltre a quelle degli altri cittadini, nè speciali  
titoli a protezione, certo ancora ciò stesso importa che si trovi libero di rimanere  
qual è costituito, finchè o non venga a violare le leggi esistenti, o la civile legisla-  
zione non sia mutata in riguardo a tutti parimente i privati sudditi dello Stato.

Fin qui intanto non è ombra di egoismo — nè il voler esser sè si confonde  
voler esser il tutto.

La questione però viene a complicarsi in apparenza quando per le progressive  
modificazioni con cui cammina la società, le nuove esigenze dello Stato non si  
facciano alle condizioni sotto le quali un Ordine religioso fu altra volta introdotto  
confini di quello.

Ma non può esser mai che due diritti evidenti del pari siano per ogni aspetto  
contraddizione.

Le nuove esigenze dello Stato possono per avventura discordare dai diritti o dalle  
condizioni stabilite ad una religione in ordine alle cose temporali. — Ora se lo  
Stato aveva consentito altra volta al corpo di essa un' esistenza legale — egli è  
evidente che questo modo di esistenza, il quale non costituisce un diritto essenziale  
l' essere di religione, ma pur era dato ad una società a titolo di religiosa, e a norma  
de' sacri canoni, e con reciproco interesse dello Stato e della Chiesa, rimane sordi-  
dinato per un rispetto all' autorità temporale, e per l' altro all' autorità della Sede  
mana, come tutte le *materie miste* soggette a subire per via di concordati le o-  
tinue modificazioni. In questo caso non puoi pur dunque negare al religioso Istit  
diritto di non veder mutate le condizioni della sua esistenza, se non per la via le-  
gale. Nè questa è indipendenza, ma dipendenza vera — la quale non sarebbe se  
quando chi è soggetto a due autorità non avesse pari riguardo ad entrambe.

Che se una società religiosa si trova stabilita in un paese senza esistenza legale  
le leggi non la possono riguardare se non sotto aspetto di associazione privata  
pari di qualunque consorzio spontaneo di cittadini, da tollerarsi o da disciogliersi.

torità civile non riconosce i superiori di lui, nè la sua comunità è altrimenti inviolabile, se non in quanto essa si mantiene nelle condizioni stabilite a qualsiasi altra radunanza libera. — Ma quanto è intero il diritto dello Stato in questa parte, altrettanto rimane intero alla religione, ed alla Chiesa il diritto sopra la parte spirituale. — L'esser di religiosi appartiene puramente alla coscienza, ed alla disciplina ecclesiastica; la qual disciplina per ciò che spetta l'ordine domestico ed il governo proprio dell'Istituto è dal Sommo Pontefice affidata unicamente ai Superiori della religione, e per ciò che riguarda i sacri Ministeri esige il consenso de' Pastori — nè può per alcun verso soggiacere all'autorità civile più, che non avvenga al Ministero Pastorale.

Sono però alcuni Ministeri speciali di certi ordini religiosi, i quali appartengono bensì per una parte alla Chiesa come uffizi di pietà, o come insegnamento dottrinale o come parte della cristiana educazione de' popoli, ma nè sono esclusivamente propri de' Pastori, nè puramente spirituali, e si trovano comunque sotto l'ispezione dell'autorità civili. Tali sono per esempio gli Istituti di carità, le scuole, le cattedre delle facoltà superiori. — Qui dunque è luogo a muovere una nuova questione: — « Possono i religiosi contendere alcun diritto a questi uffizi? — o possono pretendere di esercitarli senza soggiacere ad altri fuori che a' propri Superiori? »

Certo niuno può pretendere di prestar alcun servizio ad altri, se non in quanto possono convenire in condizioni oneste ambe le parti. I servizi necessari alla vita, alla salute eterna si offrono, si prestano fin dove è possibile sperarne l'effetto anche a prezzo di chi si ostini a rifiutarli, e a costo d'ogni sacrificio per parte di chi conosce il debito di carità. Ma fuori di questi casi, chi sia in grado di rendersi utile suole trattare con chi abbia a valersi dell'opera sua — e il trattato verte sopra queste principali condizioni, che l'utile abbia valore agli occhi di chi lo dee percepire, e colui il quale lo promette non si obblighi a rendere il suo servizio con proprio danno.

Per questi naturali principî è dunque libero ogni governo di accettare i servizi che alcun ordine religioso voglia offrire a pro del pubblico, in ordine alle scienze, alla carità — e conforme alle mire, che si sia proposte pel vero utile dello Stato gli resta a stabilire le sue condizioni. — Ma affinchè sian giuste si richiede, che concorrano del pari a sicurtà dell'util suo, e dell'integrità e dell'esistenza propria dell'Istituto, con cui si tratta. Ora ogni Istituto ha un'esistenza propria ed intima, la quale gli deriva dalle leggi sue organiche — e può avere inoltre un'esistenza legale in cui le leggi civili lo costituiscono, dandogli pubblico diritto di osservare le sue regole. — Se dunque un Governo intende di dare, o già anteriormente aveva concessa ad una Società religiosa l'esistenza legale, conviene che ogni patto ulteriore si misuri dalla libertà voluta alla piena osservanza delle costituzioni da quella Società professate. — Qualunque altra convenzione sarebbe lesiva di un diritto legittimo e riconosciuto. Qualunque violenza intentata a questo diritto sarebbe un'ingiustizia. Qualunque dubbio intorno a siffatto diritto esigerebbe d'esser rimesso al libero trattato delle parti, o all'autorità del Romano Pontefice.

Che se non si tratta di Istituto favorito di legale esistenza, nè s'intende di volerli concedere — le convenzioni son tanto più libere, e resta solo, che i Superiori di quella congregazione vedano se le sue costituzioni le concedano di fornire servizio del governo i propri individui, sotto le condizioni comuni de' pubblici funzionari.

E queste considerazioni importano assai più che non paia a prima giunta, importano non tanto all'egoismo religioso — ma alla Chiesa, ed al comune servizio de' popoli.

Havvi Istituti d'utilità locale, od ordinati ad una vita, e ad una misura di op

...tuo, possono piegarsi a maggior varietà di circostanze e di opere, sol che salvi costituzioni, che loro danno questa forma di essere.

A quelli nuoce lo stendersi, a questi lo stringersi; e il danno, che soffrirebbero gli uni e gli altri sarebbe danno della Chiesa, la quale appunto li aveva diversamente costituiti, perchè si dessero a vicenda la mano nel soccorrere a tutte le necessità de' popoli.

Oltre a ciò ogni ordine, che sia tampoco esteso in diversi stabilimenti dee provvedere alla possibile uniformità della piena osservanza — e alla libertà de' propri vimenti pel servizio comune.

Finalmente la natura diversa de' servizi, gli uni più ordinati al beneficio temporale, gli altri alla morale e religiosa educazione de' popoli, vuole altresì una maggiore o minor dipendenza delle Autorità secolari od ecclesiastiche.

Chi consideri imparzialmente queste cose, e voglia quindi applicarle alla condotta della Compagnia o di qualsiasi altra Congregazione, potrà scorgere, sempre si interessato e biasimevole il lor procedere a rilento nel modificarsi a seconda delle circostanze.

La vita, e gli atti de' corpi religiosi producono naturalmente giusta quella legge sovrana, che governa del pari i corpi civili e gli individui, e risiede intima a ciò che è.

Questa legge, che impone ad ogni cosa di conservare l'esser suo proprio, esercitare quella misura di azione, che è proporzionata alla sua natura, di accettare ciò che la conduce a perfezionare il suo essere ne' limiti suoi propri, questa legge, dico, può bensì violarsi o per errore, o per vizio da qualsiasi esser morale, ma difficilmente se ne possono discostare le intiere Società, tanto meno la possono scoscendere, per voltarla in legge d'egoismo o d'inerzia le Società religiose. — Esce i termini di questa legge, chi invece di attendere alla propria conservazione e perfezione col legittimo esercizio delle sue facoltà in armonia con l'ordine universale cui è parte, o tiene sè pel tutto, o vuol invadere i diritti altrui, o si sta neghittoso fra il comun corso delle cose, o si corrompe per qualsiasi disordine de' propri atti. Ora da tutti cotesti abusi son tanto più lontani gli Ordini religiosi, quanto questi sono più fortemente costituiti a norma de' principj cattolici, quanto derivano più immediatamente la loro esistenza e le loro costituzioni dal fonte d'ogni saviezza, quando esercitano in più varj uffici in seno alla società, ed estendendosi più ampiamente a diversi cieli, da ogni parte dell'universo son richiamati alle idee, che presiedono all'opera di Dio.

Ad ogni modo, io spero, che le generazioni future sapranno grado un giorno alla Compagnia, non meno che a tutto il clero regolare, e secolare, di quanto anch'essa sofferto per sostenere dal canto suo alcuno di questi principj di ordine e di legittima libertà.

Ora che si tenta di ridurre la macchina della temporale civiltà a più perfetta consistenza, ed unità di sistema, resta, che il secolo rifletta ai confini entro cui la repubblica intellettuale si debba restringere rispetto all'azione di quella.

Fu un tempo, in cui le dottrine stavano esclusivamente sotto la tutela della Chiesa cattolica, giusta i rispettivi diritti de' Pastori, e della Sede romana.

Fu un tempo, in cui per favorire sotto questa tutela l'attività degli intellettuali la cultura del bello la Chiesa non temette di dar luogo ad una libera emulazione fra i varj corpi insegnanti.

Allora l'autorità civile concorreva alla sublime opera della diffusione de' lumi, moltiplicarne i centri, col foruirne i mezzi impossibili a procacciarsi dagli individui.

vegliare sopra i termini dell'esistenza legale, che ai corpi insegnanti competesse.

Questi principi, portarono i loro frutti, si dovettero modificare in varie forme secondo le circostanze, ogni nuova modificazione recò nuovi vantaggi; ma si hanno da sopprimere ora così intieramente, che passate le dottrine sotto l'ispezione laicale siano da aversi per ben guarentite — e tolta la libera emulazione di vari istituti insegnanti sia meglio accesa l'attività delle menti, meglio diretto il gusto, più accelerato lo scopo?

Certo è, che buona parte d'Italia, e in generale gli studi cattolici, ritengono ancora questo o quel punto più essenziale del primo sistema; e fra i contrasti, che qui o là si manifestano ogni volta che vengono in apparente collisione i diritti dell'intelligenza, que' della Chiesa, e quei dello Stato, gli uomini di mente superiore sperano ogni dì più possibile una solida conciliazione, dove niun diritto sia sacrificato, ma tutti trovino luogo ad esercitarsi in perfetta armonia.

Questi uomini sanno, che la Compagnia non si governa per abbiellata gelosia di privilegi o di interessi. — Essi vedono che suo unico interesse è un principio che essa intende salvare, che il suo privilegio si riduce al principio cattolico, principio intrinseco della Compagnia medesima. — Essi vedono in lei non una rivale spregevole o minacciosa — sì l'espressione di quel sistema niente assurdo, e sì antico, il quale discerne i confini del triplice potere che concorre all'educazione intellettuale de' popoli — il potere civile, il potere ecclesiastico, il potere dell'intelligenza.

Anche distrutta la Compagnia, o messa fuori dall'arringo, la questione resterebbe intatta, e i nostri Italiani, che vediamo presiedere al movimento della parte più sublime degli studi civili, rispetteranno i diritti ch'essa rappresentava, non per propria utilità, ma per l'utile della scienza, della Chiesa e della repubblica.

La repubblica vuol ordine, vuole unità, vuole vegliare sull'andamento degli spiriti a difesa delle leggi, e dell'esser proprio — e questi diritti le sono tanto più propri, quanto essa assume il peso di supplire coi suoi mezzi a tutto ciò, che può favorire l'incremento ed il decoro degli studi.

Ma niuno sconoscerà, che la parte intima degli studi si riferisce a due potenze poste fuori de' confini dello Stato. — Quali sono i diritti dell'intelligenza nell'uso delle sue facoltà? Quali i diritti della Chiesa sopra le dottrine? Quali i mezzi da favorire il libero esercizio senza compromettere i diritti della repubblica?

Questi problemi sono posti fuori della sfera dell'egoismo e dell'invidia. — La Compagnia non si ha per vile, nè per usurpatrice de' diritti d'alcuno, quando si limita a solo sostenere con modesta fermezza ciò, che rimane di salvo a pro della libera emulazione de' vari corpi insegnanti, sotto le leggi comuni volute da ogni buon ordine di civiltà. Ma essa non crede esser sola tutrice dei principi, che ha ereditati dalle tradizioni de' maggiori. — Per ciò li difende, con quella calma, che è ispirata dalla fiducia. — Nulla di ciò, che altra volta fu vero ed efficace all'avvicinamento della civiltà può perire intieramente — e perirà tanto meno in quest'età, o in questi paesi, dove domina in petto agli uomini colti ed emiaenti uno zelo nobile e sincero così per la fede, per la scienza, per ogni buon diritto, come per ogni incremento del pubblico bene.

### IPOCRISIA E MANEGGI.

L'ipocrisia non può giudicarsi dalle sole apparenze di virtù, altrimenti tutte le persone modeste, umili, liberali, caritatevoli, tutti i predicatori del vero, tutti i santi, avrebbero donde esser riputati ipocriti.

Neppure da una qualsiasi mescolanza o alternativa di atti virtuosi, e di colpe.

*Pellico.*

non possa venir meno.

Donde apparisce adunque l'ipocrisia? Non da altra prova propria e sufficiente non da una tal serie di fatti, la quale dimostri, che l'uomo si fa delle apparenze virtuose un velo per riuscire ad opere perverse.

— Ci vogliou dunque opere perverse, con le loro prove sufficienti — più un corso di circostanze onde risulti, che le opere virtuose non erano messe in campo fuorchè per inganno.

Non altrimenti è da dire de' maneggi. A giudicare sinistramente di un'azione condotta con segreti concerti, non basta la sola circostanza dell'ombra, o della scoperta, nè dell'accordo, con che molte persone vi si dian la mano. — Chè assai mente parlando queste due condizioni son proprie dell'operar prudente, e delle prese di maggior rilievo.

Vili e disonesti sono i maneggi allorchè o tendono a mal fine, o si conducono con mezzi disdicevoli alla coscienza e all'onore. — Ma quanto più il sospetto èabile a concepirsi in questa materia va soggetto all'influenza di qualche passione può indurre a giudizi temerari, e a calunniosi sospetti, tanto più la giustizia che prima di dichiararoi intriganti, subdoli, infami calunniatori, ipocriti sedotti de' semplici e de' grandi, si abbiano alla mano prove di fatto, onde risulti, che lo stesso trattamento con le persone, o conduce ad effetti immorali, od offende nei modi la delicatezza, l'onestà, il religioso decoro.

Ora chi mai si è dato fin qui l'impresa di metter innanzi tal sorta di prove per dimostrare l'ipocrisia, od i turpi intrighi de' Gesuiti?

Si concede che fanno il bene, ma si sospetta, si ripete, che quella è puramente schiera. — Scuopriamo dunque una volta il vizio nascosto, vediamo le ree cose che i Gesuiti conducono in opera sotto il velo di religione e di virtù.

Già abbiám veduto testè che sia da pensare di quell'ambizione, onde loro si fa capitale accusa. Non è già dessa quella, che faccia gli ipocriti, gli intriganti, gli adulatori; ma si congiunge anzi con tutte le virtù evangeliche, e fa gli uomini onesti. Passiamo ad altro.

Sarem ancora accusati di turpe avarizia, e di trafficar le coscienze? Tu dici di esser persuaso che a ciò volgiamo la studiata nostra bontà. Tu parli della *modestia opulenza*, di cui non sappiamo esser paghi. È quella forse, che ci viene sostenuta dalle dotazioni de' nostri stabilimenti? Consulta adunque i libri del pubblico, dove son registrate; poi guarda al numero de' religiosi, che dobbiamo sostentare in ciascuna casa, ai pesi di manutenzione degli edifizi, alle spese del culto, e a quanto occorre infine all'amministrazione di simili stabilimenti, e vedrai che non ci rimane di uscire de' più stretti limiti della modestia chericale. — Non paghi di quella modestia opulenza, tu soggiungi, che andiamo *carpendo i doni ed i redditaggi*; e bisognerebbe quel verbo *carpire*, chè quanto al ricevere dalla spontanea carità de' cristiani, dal farcene un delitto, ogni legge ne' giusti termini ce lo consentirebbe; ma non preveduto, che una sì brutta esagerazione da te voluta credere e ripetere, com'è fatto, fanno le calunnie, sopra la sola parola altrui, col troppo asserire non prove nulla.

A far fede in materie sì gravi presso chi voglia ragionare sul serio si esigono prove di fatto, non romanzi come quello del Sue. — Dove sono le famiglie, i dotti eredi, i quali abbiano a laguarsi delle liberalità da noi carpite a loro danno? Io sì ti saprei dire quanti Gesuiti ogni anno cedono ai loro congiunti, quella parte del patrimonio, cui avrebbero avuto diritto di serbarsi o di consacrare a servizio dell'a Compagnia.



... questa è beatitudine di soli coloro, che fattisi poveri per Cristo acquistano per la sua promessa uno speciale diritto alla sua pietosa provvidenza — e quanto più sarà vero che in que' paesi i generosi cattolici d'ogni condizione son sì benevoli e sì larghi donatori da fornire il necessario non che a' Sacerdoti della Compagnia, da' quali ricevono spirituale servizio, ma persino a più centinaia di giovani studenti e novizi, tanto meno sarà a credere, che que' Gesuiti si mostrino sì vili, ed indegni da dar sospetto di ingordigia. Non vedo, miglior testimonio del nostro nobile e schietto disinteresse, di quello che sia l'amore, con cui tante persone onorate e pratiche delle cose nostre proseguono a volerci sostentare, e ad assicurarci una generazione di giovani, i quali succedano ne' medesimi ministeri. — E poni mente, che questi ministeri li esercitiamo pure senza stipendio, che nè anche delle messe prendiamo la limosina, nè in privato nè in comune, ma quante si portano alle nostre Chiese tutte sono registrate e distribuite ai Sacerdoti estranei, che ivi sogliono celebrare. — E che il P. Generale riceva provento delle nostre Messe, è invenzione fondata sopra l'obbligo, che in verità abbiamo di celebrare ogni mese parecchie volte il santo Sacrificio ora per lui, ora per le nostre missioni, ora per i benefattori, ora per i nostri defunti, ma questi son tutti impegni di carità, e null' altro.

Ma, per finirla sopra questa materia, rammenta solo quante volte, or qua, or là è stata la Compagnia soppressa, scacciata, spogliata, e sempre con la speranza per certe anime volgari d'averne a cogliere i tesori. Rammenta la generale soppressione di tutto l'Ordine eseguita con ispeciale studio di assicurare le sue spoglie ai benemeriti denunziatori, e giudici delle enormezze gesuitiche. A che si ridussero le entrate delle fondazioni? Non si sono trovate tutte legate a tali opere di culto o di carità che niuno ne poteva arricchire? Quale amministrazione poté col succedere alle entrate de' Gesuiti, sostenerne così gratuitamente tutti i pesi? O se furon trovate ricche Chiese, provano queste un abuso, che per noi si facesse dell'oro? O se piansero molte povere famiglie che ogni nostro collegio sosteneva ossia con limosine spontanee, per obbligo di pii legati, era questa un'opera sì strana o di sì reo aspetto, o di tanto nostro utile? in somma *un usufruttuare l'indigenza o la cupidigia, un ampliare col danaro il numero de' clienti* come tu dici?

Ma prima che ai vili clienti, fu pur un tempo in cui buona parte de' Gesuiti avrebber avuto estremo bisogno di provveder a sè medesimi. Quando i Gesuiti dei domini di Portogallo furono trasportati in Italia, allora sarebbe stato a dar mano a grandi tesori tenuti in serbo dal Generale, allora dovea più che mai porsi in opera l'arte di *carpire i doni e i rediviti*, o se le rendite delle case ove stavano ripartite agli esuli fossero state sì pingui, se dalle case, donde venivano espulsi avessero portato con sè sì ricche spoglie, allora era a giovarsene pel comune sostentamento. Ma quelle spoglie, nè quei tesori, nè le entrate, nè i doni carpiri bastarono a sostentare per breve tempo la miseria di tanti. — Convenne impetrare la licenza dalla santa Sede di vendere gli oggetti consacrati alla Chiesa. — Convenne al Generale far ricorso alle lontane Provincie per farle tutte contribuire con proporzionato sacrificio al sovvenimento de' fratelli. E con tutto ciò rimane memoria del patire, che fecero estrema povertà, così di panni, come d'ogni cosa.

Si sa del resto che il nostro preteso commercio col nuovo mondo od in Oriente

(1) Non so sino a qual punto tu ti sii scandalizzato del furto falloci l'anno scorso a Parigi . . . . Ti farò pertanto notare qui di passaggio, che il capitale rappresentato dalle Cattedrali di cui Alfnaer s'era impadronito (poichè aveva tra le mani la chiave, lo aveva rubato tutto) non formando più che una rendita di circa dieci mila franchi, e questi divisibili fra tre Provincie, dove varie case mancano di dotazione fissa, non può dare per sè un'idea di grandi ricchezze.

Si sa che la Compagnia non trascurò dal canto suo di sorvegliare i suoi procuratori, e che niuno di essi potè sperare da' Superiori il menomo consenso a tali speculazioni ( ancorchè lecite ad altri ) le quali disdicessero alla professione religiosa. Si sa che gli Stati Europei tolsero ben presto a considerare le missioni della Compagnia in Oriente ed in America come oggetti di speculazioni finanziere, e di garbati diplomatiche, ma senza che a' Missionarii e alla Compagnia ne tornasse altro che di vedere le cristianità vendute, oppresse, disperse, e versato invano il proprio sangue.

Si sa benissimo, che generosa sempre nel sacrificare le vite de' suoi alla conquista di nuove popolazioni, pur troppo spesso le mancò onde alimentare co' necessari soccorsi di danaro le chiese nascenti.

Si sa finalmente che una nuova fondazione non arricchisce punto la Compagnia, ma non fa altro, che darle il mezzo e l'obbligo di sostenere un maggior numero di soggetti, calcolato sempre il loro sostentamento al puro necessario pel vitto, per l'istituto, per gli studii e pel culto.

Ma ciò, che è pur da sapersi, si è che le regole di povertà, lasciateci dal Fondatore ci sono lette ogni mese in Refettorio, e dichiarate nelle domestic esortazioni; e dicono quanto dobbiamo amare quella virtù, custodirla, averla per sicurezza così contro le lusinghe d'una vita molle e superba, come contro l'invidia del mondo; averla come titolo alla libertà delle nostre predicazioni, e d'ogni nostro ministero, come carattere onorevole della nostra apostolica professione; che oltre a sì fatte regole, i Padri Generali discendendo nelle loro ordinazioni a varii particolari, esortano a singolare delicatezza di disinteresse per parte di que' nostri, che siano in caso di stare co' grandi; — che finalmente è singolar voto de' professi, non solo di vegliare alla perfetta osservanza della povertà, ma di restringerla, ove occorra, anche di più, come di fatto fu eseguito in qualche punto dopo ristabilita la Compagnia (2).

Ciò sappi, dunque; e poi vedi tu come sia a concepirsi tanta nostra avidità di ricchezze, tanta fiducia nell'oro pel successo de' nostri intenti, da contraddire sensibilmente quelle medesime regole, cui non cessiamo di voler rileggere, ed incrinare, ed osservare. Quando cominciano a trasgredirsi le leggi, si lasciano scritte in libri, non si rimettono incessantemente sotto gli occhi. — Altrimenti a supporre che si trasgrediscano sì presenti, e sia pari l'impegno nel ricordarle, e nell'operare.

(1) Non temerei pure di ricordare qui il famoso Lavallette. La sorte di lui vale l'apoteosi di tutti i procuratori delle nostre Missioni. Perché gli avversari fanno di lui, e di lui solo chiasso? — Egli fu di fatto il solo, che abbia violato i confini della amministrazione che gli competeva, lanciandosi a speculazioni di commercio, per impegno di giovare alla Compagnia.

Ma egli fu ben lungi dal volerne consapevoli i suoi Superiori. Di più, oltre all'immensa distanza, che lo separava dalla residenza del suo Provinciale quanto è dalla Martinica a Parigi, sì fu tanto più abbandonato al suo arbitrio, quanto i visitatori mandati successivamente furon per molti anni impediti per le tempeste e dalla morte per giungere fin colà.

Del resto la passione, con cui fu giudicato quest'affare dai Parlamenti lascia troppo luogo a credere, che la sua colpa ed i suoi debiti siano stati esagerati — e consta che la vendita delle sole possessioni della Martinica avrebbe dato, onde soddisfare tutti i creditori.

(2) E ciò in qualche punto accessorio per maggior perfezione, non già essenziale, chè in tutto a questo per misericordia di Dio e vigilanza de' Superiori la Compagnia non ebbe mai bisogno alcuna riforma, avendo sempre ne' suoi mantenuta la più stretta vita comune, e posson far fede come si viva tra noi quanto alla povertà religiosa tutti quelli, che essendo stati de' nostri usci poi dell'Ordine per qualche ragione, o ne furono dimessi. Chi non ci conosce se non dai libri famatori, che sono una moltitudine, leggermente crede che noi nuotiamo nelle delizie fino alla gola, e che sudiamo ambra e zibetto.

Vediamo adunque a qual altro genere di colpevoli maneggi siano intesi i Gesuiti. — Attendono essi all'oppressione de' deboli e degli innocenti?

Tu ti noveri fra le lor vittime. — Oh quanto a me tuo stretto collega, com'era ai tempi cui tu accenni, non isdegnare, ch'io colga quest'occasione non tanto per lavarmi da una calunnia, quanto per darti una pubblica dimostrazione del dolore, cui partecipai alla tua sorte. — Ma soffri ch'io aggiunga, che entrato dappoi nella Compagnia, vidi questi miei padri e fratelli esserne stati del pari innocenti ed addolorati. — Mi fosse concesso di dir più, aggiungerei cosa, per cui io in qualità di tuo amico mi incarico volentieri del debito di tua gratitudine.

Tu parli dell'Ab. Bessone, ma della sua disgrazia la cagione. ignorata già dalla Compagnia come dal pubblico, la conosci tu veramente? Se il volgo può appagarsi d'udirli a ripetere le sue congetture, ti giovan forse ad acquistar nome d'uomo intendente d'affari e di politica presso la miglior classe de' tuoi lettori? Ciò, ch'io cercando di questo fatto, ne intesi, non è da confidarsi per via di stampa. Ma bastami a respingere la calunnia, in cui sotto l'amplissimo concetto di gesuitismo, vorresti qui per avventura involta la Compagnia.

Tu parli di Dettori. — Ma qui, ten prego, non abusare del rispetto e della gratitudine, ch'io serbo al nostro professore. I miei fratelli non pretendono, che a questi debiti, prevalga il mio zelo per la difesa della Compagnia, sicchè io trascorra a menzionare alcun torto di chi mi fu come padre, e partecipò, come già non tutti, al dolore della mia famiglia nella disgrazia di Silvio. Mi basti la testimonianza, ch'io odo rendersi ancora adesso, da un illustre Magistrato, il quale ripete, esser grato a Dio della vita serbatagli fino a quest'ora per protestare, conscio com'è d'ogni circostanza del fatto, contro l'accusa, che tu intenti per quello alla Compagnia. Che se l'amore del maestro ti fa cercare con qualche sdegno chi l'abbia colpito, Dio ti rimeriti virtuoso affetto; ma, per Dio, sii giusto, e non volerti far un pregio o di affermazioni, che non sappi, o di dissimulare, a danno degli innocenti, ciò, che pur troppo non ignori.

Tu ricordi l'esito lagrimevole del Lamennais, quasi della perdita di questo difensore la Chiesa debba essere *principalmente obbligata* ai Gesuiti. E tu non osservi, che quando la santa Sede pronunziò intorno al sistema di Lamennais, già egli s'era mostrato in tale disposizione di spirito, non più di chi abbia ad udire l'oracolo di Roma, bensì di chi disprezzerà Roma, ove non ascolti il suo.

Tu non osservi, che già prima d'allora egli s'era siffattamente esaltato, da eccitare contro di sè una specie di censura per parte d'alcuni prelati francesi, tutta in un senso sì gallicano, che i Gesuiti non poterono avervi partecipato. — Ma già per esso si notava pure quello spirito insubordinato, il quale col ribellarsi più tardi a Roma non fece altro se non mostrarsi consentaneo alla propria tendenza.

Tu non sai per avventura, che quando Lamennais maledice i Gesuiti, egli non fa, che eseguire una minaccia, con la quale avea voluto indurre il P. Generali Fortis ad adottare il suo sistema nelle scuole della Compagnia, la quale, ove non l'avesse pur penetrato si addentro da scorgere in che peccava, mai però non poteva discendere a simil patto con un filosofo privato, e tanto meno per qualsiasi umano rispetto.

Ciò, ch'egli stampò in Francia del quanto ebbe a lodarsi delle paterne accoglienze del Pontefice, osò tentare di dirlo a Firenze, quando appena usciva di Roma. Roma però era troppo vicina, e l'impostura non tornò, che a svelare viemmeglio lo stato mentale dell'infelice.

Troppo da sè, ed in virtù del suo sistema, e per naturale proclività agli eccessi fu Lamennais trascinato al punto, che tutti deploriamo.



che stesse ferma ad eliminare tutte proprie scuole di ieri, e di oggi. Non avesse preso a discutere senza passione il novello sistema, essa però non si è punto ad affrettarne la condanna; ma questa fu da lui medesimo provocata da esagerazioni, in cui calde nel suo *Avenir*.

Lasciamo a Dio il giudizio d'un uomo, che a sì belle facoltà, e a sì nobili inclinazioni accoppiava pur troppa debolezza, quella cioè di chi confida soverchiamente in se stesso. Stimato onore la persuasione d'esser solo o primo, là dove si tratta d'un vero cattolico.

La misericordia, che con te gli preghiamo, e speriamo da Dio non esige che tu dimentichi i termini della giustizia nel giudicare di noi; nè finchè la rovina d'Ario non s'abbia da apporre allo zelo di Atanasio, o Leone decimo si debba imputare dell'apostasia di Lutero, sarà mai che la misura tanto più discreta, in cui la Compagnia si tenne nel prevenire la disgrazia di Lamennais, ci faccia rei della disobbedienza alla santa Sede.

Io cerco dunque altre colpe che svelino il mal talento de' Gesuiti, e provino la loro ipocrisia.

Ma tu stesso rendi testimonianza alla purità de' nostri costumi, tu li chiami *reprensibili*, anzi pur *lodevoli*.

Non son dunque a cercarsi delitti scoperti a nostra infamia, non sono azioni più da noi condotte, sotto maschera di santità, a un termine che alfine ci abbia a condurre. Ripetervi, che ci tradiscono le nostre dottrine? Dottrine tali con che miriamo a paganizzare le virtù e i dogmi! Ma di quelle dottrine istesse che ci rimproveriamo, facciamo punto mistero, nè usiamo arti o premura di propagarle. — Paghi della libertà che la Chiesa ci lascia di mantenerle, come han fatto altri dottori di diversi tempi, non possiamo esserne incolpati finchè non si provi che ne facciamo quel male che tu pretendi. Anzi quelle dottrine istesse sono appunto che ci fanno avversari degli eretici, zionalisti, gli eterodossi, e quelli fra i cattolici, che presumono nelle virtù naturali nell'indipendenza dalla Chiesa.

Addurrai in prova del nostro spirito d'ipocrisia, ciò che alcun nostro moralista abbia scritto intorno agli equivoci? Ma noi sì che possiamo lagnarci del mal uso che si suol fare a nostro vitupero di que' medesimi equivoci, onde altri s'argomentino dimostrarci quali artefici di menzogne.

Tu che conosci la Teologia, nè puoi ignorare i termini segnati dai nostri moralisti alla prudenza cristiana, non vorrai far eco alle burlesche voci, con che Paganini od altri se ne mostrano scandolezzati. — Chè allora appunto è detestabile e burlesco l'equivoco, quando non per necessità di nascondere un vero, non già in modo da potersi intendere da chi vi ponga mente, ma per muovere un'accusa, per imputare in fronte agli innocenti un marchio d'infamia, si confondono, e si travisano i fatti e le parole, sicchè il volgo s'induca necessariamente a crederle, nel senso d'esageratori della morale cristiana.

Ma, si ripiglia, che cos'è quell'operare sì proprio de' Gesuiti, subdolo e sarnoso? Quel maneggiarsi dappertutto amici e cooperatori? Quel giungere senza sospetto a' loro fini? Quel mostrarsi come impassibili in faccia a chi li odia e li oltraggia? E questa condotta possibile a spiegarsi fuorchè congetturando i segreti maneggi e la simulazione, cui dee mettere in opera?

Ecco dunque lume da penetrare tutta l'arte gesuitica — ecco la via da tenere per voglia vederne il fondo.

Ove certi ingegni non conoscono altro mezzo di giovare alla verità o alla giustizia, fuorchè la guerra a mano armata, o le pubbliche contese, o le trame segrete, la prudenza Cristiana conosce di più quel modo tutto divino per cui la sovranità

chiata, nè perde tempo tuttavia perchè il suo danno, sarebbe danno fors' anche eterno di molti — quella divina forza dell'amore e della bontà, che è l'arma più degna e più efficace ad ottenere sopra i cuori glorioso trionfo — quella divina economia che tollera la zizzania per non rovinare al tutto il buon formento — quella reconducibile astuzia infine, insegnata da Gesù Cristo, la quale consiste nel prefiggersi per unico fine la gloria di Dio nella salute eterna degli uomini, e per buon mezzo a quel fine l'umiltà, la pazienza, la costanza, la generosità a dare per Dio, e per gli uomini tutto ciò che occorre, sino il proprio sangue. Intendi come questi principii di prudenza e di forza sopra natura debbano riuscire? — E guarda al fatto. — Noi, checchè altri ne dica, non riusciamo ad onori, non riusciamo ad utile temporale, non riusciamo a soverchiare i nostri rivali (1). La lotta tra noi e il mondo ha per oggetto le opinioni, le credenze, i doveri. Essa è lotta apostolica. — Condotti in essa dalla Chiesa, e dallo spirito di Gesù Cristo, cui attingiamo nelle nostre regole, non vedrai, che facciam uso di mezzi onesti, neggi disonesti, di intrighi interessati, di cabale, di vili servitù verso nessuno, ma che si ci vedrai umiliati, invidiati, calunniati, e dopo ciò, e a dispetto di ciò benedetti, esaltati, perchè? perchè la pazienza, la carità, la verità hanno conseguito qualche trionfo a gloria di Dio.

E sia pur benedetto Dio dell'averci posti, in questi tempi singolarmente, fra circostanze sì favorevoli a dimostrare, come la nostra efficacia sia lungi dall'appoggiarsi sopra il mendicato favore de' grandi. — Sì, gli animi grandi son nati a conoscere i primi la verità, la giustizia, l'innocenza — sì, certo son posti a tutelarle contro le passioni nemiche — sì, il mondo ne vedrà sempre a gloria della povera umanità decaduta, di tali, che diventino degni di associarsi con Dio nella difesa d'ogni buon diritto.

— Tali tu vedi appunto manifestarsi sul Calvario, quando a disinganno di tanti i grandi Gesù Cristo ebbe data l'estrema lezione di generosa umiltà. — Ma era quel momento da invidiargliene l'amicizia?

Che se le tue asserzioni sì generali si riferiscono a circostanze, in cui la Compagnia pareva partecipare non che alla pietà, ma al potere di alcuni monarchi — perchè non citarne l'apposita storia di quel *Grégoire*, il quale si diede sì degnamente a questa missione di istruire su questo particolare la Chiesa, i principi e le nazioni? Se il tuo patrio doveva arrossire di invocare una tale testimonianza — perchè osavi dar alle tue proposizioni una generalità, un tuono affermativo, animato, solenne, che non pure lo zelo giansenistico seppe dare a chi ponevasi alla presenza de' fatti?

Egli avea pur concentrato lo sguardo sopra il teatro, che sia mai stato più libero agli intrighi gesuitici, sopra un genere di fatti osservato già studiosamente dagli ingegni meno disposti a perdonare al Sacerdote qualunque sua influenza. Egli consultava e cita con la più costante parzialità i suoi autori giansenisti, protestanti, corbani, gianseniani, romanzieri, raccoglitori anonimi di cronache e di memorie, e non rare volte tra loro stessi discordi. — Da tutti coglie il più bel fiore — aneddoti isolati, gli umili, i ridicoli, misteriosi, inconcludenti, gli altri assurdi, o con evidente l'impronta della malignità che li compose, o già giudicati con miglior critica dagli uomini seri. — Ma poi da quell'impasto di congetture, di sospetti, di elogi, e di acerbe accuse, quali fatti risultano, onde si abbia l'idea di quel gesuitismo, che *sotto i nomi de' re governò le nazioni a profitto della Compagnia*?

Lo dice egli stesso nel conchiudere la sua storia: « Riesce sovente malagevole il giudicare la condotta de' confessori che formano il soggetto di quest'opera ».

(1) Ciò osserva così bene il conte Alessio di Saint-Priest, il quale da gentiluomo di mondo non intende perchè riputati intriganti sosteniamo sì male la nostra reputazione in quest'arte.

« verte sopra articoli pertinenti al solo tribunale di penitenza, si han tutti i mezzi  
« denigrare impunemente un uomo, il quale non può difendersi, poichè il segret  
« del suo ministero gli chiude per sempre la bocca . . .

« E i consigli ancor più savî, le prescrizioni più precise son esse sempre ric  
« te con cuor docile ? »

Nè dovea qui dimenticare di aggiungere : — E l' accoppiare al ministero s  
tuale alcun incarico di consigliere negli affari ecclesiastici, il partecipare all' elez  
pe' benefici, o alle discussioni in fatto di sacra dottrina — comunque ci paia n  
opportuno, era egli o vietato dai canoni, o pretesa de' Gesuiti, e non anzi condiz  
fatta perpetua e comune a qualunque sacerdote fosse eletto a confessore titolare  
Sovrano ? E fra i contrasti tutti propri di tali cariche esposte alle invidie, alle c  
che degli emuli, e de' malcontenti, si vuol imporre al solo Gesuita il dovere di c  
piacere a tutti, o una sorte diversa da quella degli uomini di coscienza intemer  
ferma ?

« Così adunque, dice ingenuamente, così per via di presunzioni, e di cong  
« re, più o meno fondate, l' opinion pubblica riappicca ai nomi dei PP. La Chai  
« le Tellier la revocazione dell' editto di Nantes, le *dragonnades*, il formulario  
« Bolla *Unigenitus*, e la prima emissione degli ottanta mila mandati di arresto  
« luti pel loro trionfo. »

Ed egli parla de' più odiosi, de' sommi tipi del gesuitismo intrigante, me  
*menziona parecchi altri Gesuiti con giusti elogi.*

Poteva egli meglio attenuare l' idea di quel sì potente, sì astuto, sì ingordo  
funesto spirito della Compagnia di Gesù ?

Spero che il tuo affermare più esagerato non conduca gli uomini savî a  
chiuder nulla di più decisivo di quello che risulti da una storia siffatta. Onde  
sentirai che chi abbia a giudicarci si stia ad interrogare da un canto le nostre reg  
e dall' altro i fatti evidenti della nostra condotta attuale.

Ma le nostre regole — ( ed osserva, che non furono stampate per passare  
le mani del pubblico, ma come ognun sa per sola nostra privata norma ) — le n  
regole intorno al trattare co' grandi, e di affari temporali sono purissime e sev  
sime, tanto che in virtù di quelle la Compagnia non esitò all' occorrenza di rige  
da sè il religioso, che si fosse lasciato illudere da altro spirito. — I fatti poi m  
festi della nostra presente condotta, per ciò stesso che non fuggon la luce non h  
bisogno d' essere giustificati — o son regolati a norma del comune Istituto, e n  
potrà pigliarne scandalo se non con occhio farisaico — o sono imputabili a pri  
errore dell' individuo, e ragion vuole che la Compagnia ne sia tenuta innocente.

Sopra negozi indegni, che si pretendono occultamente maneggiati, non so  
soglia più dilettersi di far congetture, fuorchè gli uomini di basso e tristo inge  
L' istinto di certe fantasie a sospettare intrighi pieni di laidezza, d' ipocrisia, di  
della, non mi par punto più sublime o ragionevole di quello che fosse ne' temp  
dati il sognare diavolerie, e streghe, ed anticristi; — pari è in entrambi di quest  
nii vaghezza di misteri infernali, pari assenza di criterio storico; se pur il primo  
corchè meno volgare, non partecipa più del secondo agli affetti più ciechi e ma  
del cuore umano.

Oh non sarà mai ch' io mi creda ridotto a disputare con ingegni di questa tem

I nostri censori professano di ragionare seriamente per zelo della Chiesa —  
odio sincero dell' ipocrisia. Vogliano essi pertanto definire, che cosa è da inten  
per maneggi e per intrighi. — Se la loro morale fa alcun luogo ad una misur

non è sempre coronata di felice successo, avranno agevolmente la chiave di molti fatti, che possono esserci imputati a colpa. — E se per arti ipocrite e malefiche intendono i raggiri, le simulazioni dove sotto aspetto di mentita virtù si serve a fini abbielti, disonesti, iniqui, voglio, che prima d'imputarci o individualmente, o in comune alcuna somigliante indegnità, portino la mano sopra la propria coscienza, mi giurino, che quel loro odio all'ipocrisia può bastare ad impormi tanta fiducia nella loro sincerità, quanta le guarentigie sì sacre e sì molteplici, offerte al mondo alla chiesa dalla Compagnia.

Uguagliati a questo patto i diritti, potrebbero trattar francamente. — O cessano le diffidenze, o quando coi fatti essi smentiscano a nostro riguardo la professione di uomini retti, disinteressati, alieni dalle cabale, dovrebbero consentir d'esser ripudiati per giudici.

Se non che dell'esser noi que' scellerati ipocriti, che altri ci vuole, vedo ben qual è la solita dimostrazione. — Noi ci teniamo in fuori delle fazioni politiche. Noi dichiariamo per i diritti vigenti, e vorremmo anzi maturo progresso per via di virtuosa operazione, che non un avvenire mal preparato col rovesciamento del presente.

Per ciò, che tu stesso vorresti, quando ragioni con flemma, per ciò s'incolpano i Gesuiti del delitto più odioso, che sia, quasi occulti traditori della patria, partigiani de' suoi oppressori, sacrileghi cospiratori, che vendono la religione a pro del despotismo.

Questa materia però è troppo degna d'esser trattata separatamente, e ciò farò nell' esporre i *Principii di civile educazione*, dove avrò da render ragione della condotta della Compagnia, rispetto alle opposte fazioni politiche.

Qui basti notare, che per buona sorte l'accusa d'ipocrisia non ci vien data fuorchè da coloro, che od hanno evidente interesse a screditarci, o non ci vogliono conoscere dappresso.

Sarebbe giusto l'aspettare un giudizio più imparziale. E grazie a Dio, se non ci assolve abbastanza il silenzio, anzi il favore e la fiducia, che la Chiesa mantiene a nostro riguardo, non sarà lungi per noi, nè pe' nostri detrattori il giorno, che squarcierà il velo d'ogni coscienza.

### PROBABILISMO, MOLINISMO, RITI CINESI ec.

I tempi presenti esigono sopra ogni altra cosa, che i Gesuiti guarentiscano la bontà delle loro dottrine.

Ciò esigerebbe per la prima la Chiesa cattolica, se già non ci sapesse fedeli. Imperocchè — se mai viene il tempo, in cui l'apostolato della Cattolicità domanderà peculiare aiuto del ministero locale de' Pastori l'opera d'un illustre Istituto militante, certo il Papa, i Vescovi ed i Parrochi, hanno da essere più che mai assicurati, che la dottrina di quell'Istituto non solo sia pura, ma abbia ogni requisito all'ufficio di collegare tutti gli uomini in fratellanza e nell'amore del comun Padre.

Ma mentre la Chiesa è paga delle guarentigie, assicuratesi fin dall'istituire che ella fece la Compagnia nella forma ch'essa mantiene tuttora, e col volerla nella medesima forma ripristinata, — la civiltà, la quale non vede sì da lungi, e acquista i suoi lumi coll'andar del tempo, può credere d'avere i suoi buoni motivi di diffidenza di questa sorta di religiosi.

Saranno essi abbastanza cattolici? — saranno abbastanza severi nell'insegnamento morale? Saranno abbastanza discreti nella direzione delle anime? Rispetteranno i limiti delle giurisdizioni pastorali! Non insegneranno a contrastare alle leggi patrie? Non tenderanno coi loro principî a sconcertare le novelle generazioni del presente?

*Pellico:*

s'intende di procedere a soluzioni di forma canonica o legale, oppur priva filosofica.

Quando avviene, che una nazione cattolica tratti formalmente in consulto la Sede apostolica, essa non possa con fiducia introdurre, o mantenere nel suo seno i Gesuiti, e cerchi una via di conciliazione e di tolleranza delle loro dottrine, ecco la via ch'essa può tenere. — Interroghi la Sede apostolica se la Compagnia di Gesù gode la sua fiducia così nell'insegnamento della dottrina morale, come in quello del Dogma. — E tanto basta. — La santa Sede ha la mano sopra tutto l'ordine, la santa Sede ha gli occhi sopra tutta la terra, la santa Sede ha cura di far procedere con ogni armonia l'apostolato de' Gesuiti sotto la libera approvazione de' Vescovi diocesani. — Più, essa è giudice della Dottrina cattolica, ed è nell'indole sua di universale maestra di tener giuste le bilancie fra le opinioni disputabili, finchè non siano compromesse le verità definite, aspettando da un pacifico conflitto di quelle accrescimento di luce agli intelletti. — Finalmente la Sede apostolica romana, siccome madre comune guarentisce col suo affetto, e con la missione conferita da Cristo, tutto quel miglior bene che una nazione possa desiderare dal suo ministero religioso per suo proprio avanzamento nella via della civiltà.

Ora se si procede per questa via, non è dubbio che per quanto la Sede apostolica sia stata fin qui provocata ad esaminare viemeglio le nostre dottrine, non sia per rispondere a tutti i popoli: ascoltate pure i Gesuiti, il loro insegnamento non discorde dal mio.

Ma entrati nello stato lungi dagli occhi di Roma, non sarà chi li sorvegli immediatamente? — La civiltà non potrà domandar loro, che diano conto, che onorino i pignoli del retto loro insegnare il Simbolo ed il Decalogo.

Ecco dunque un'altra sicurezza. Quanto al Simbolo ed al Decalogo, e a tutto ciò che faccia parte del deposito rivelato, nè la Compagnia, nè i sacri Pastori debbono aver altra sicurezza fuorchè il mostrarsi in perpetua comunione con gli altri Pastori e con la Sede apostolica — non sottomettendo le loro dottrine, ma insegnandole. — Quanto poi alle materie opinabili e soggette a potersi discutere senza danno della fede, sta nella coscienza di chi vede il vedere se sia pregio del suo decoro, e della sua equità filosofica il gettare la spada su questa, o quella parte della bilancia. — Chè se lo fa, la sua legge, in quanto importa all'ordine pubblico dovrà essere rispettata. — Ma essa vorrà sempre non intromettersi in queste materie, quanto più sarà illuminata e forte. — L'importanza delle varie opinioni contrarie, ovvero ad un'opinione in favore d'un'altra, non è un favorire la verità, non è un educare la nazione a vedere i suoi propri interessi, non è un formare le coscienze a rispettare i propri dettami. — Bensì sono da pigliarsi, o da reprimersi le passioni, che potessero compromettere l'armonia fra i Pastori, e la pace dello Stato. — Al qual fine non sarà mai che la Sede Romana, la Compagnia, nè alcun'altra scuola cattolica neghi di impegnare il proprio onore con ogni mezzo di efficace prudenza.

Nè tema la civiltà, che col meno sorvegliare i teologi, non si riapra per avvertire l'arringo scolastico a questioni inutili, e all'intemperanza del sofisticare. — Ma ch'essa faccia il suo cammino ai bramati progressi, e gli spiriti dati allo speculativo saran tolti dall'ozio per attendere con utile studio al corso delle cose presenti. Quando essa accusa gli scolastici de' secoli passati, si ricordi ciò ch'essa era allora, e ciò ch'essi aveano a dire di lei. — Si ricordi, che anche quel tanto, che essa ora disprezza, le giovò ad esercizio di molti intelletti, a difesa di molte verità, ora presente è ricca. Si ricordi infine qual è la sua sfera; quella dilata, quella abbrevia con incessante lavoro — e quando la Chiesa dal canto suo, i sacri Pastori, i teologi, i religiosi, siano solo impegnati nei rispettivi loro legami col centro della fede.



nel di splendore, di libertà, e di pace.

Ma chi voglia da sè qual giudice privato formarsi un concetto sufficientemente adeguato delle dottrine, che i Gesuiti professano — dopo riconosciuto che la Compagnia vive in evidente comunione con la Chiesa cattolica, se gli rimanga qualche timore intorno alle opinioni disputabili, che si professino da' nostri teologi, potrà starsene a que' pochi punti capitali, ai quali tu stesso ti limiti, cui anzi presceglierai come esprimenti il peggio, che si possa raccogliere dai nostri libri.

Intento a screditare la dottrina gesuitica, siccome degna di ispirare diffidenza ed orrore ad ogni buon cattolico, e ad ogni zelatore di civiltà — tu mostri che la radice logica degli scandali, di cui i Gesuiti sono, e potrebbero tuttora esser colpevoli in fatto di dottrina morale, è il *probabilismo* — e che altrettanto fa il *molinismo* negli ordini speculativi (*Proleg. p. 153*).

— Le quali radici alimentate da doppio reo spirito, da quello cioè di adescare la folla delle anime fiacche con ogni possibile agevolezza, e di togliere a qualsiasi avversario la libertà di pensar altrimenti da noi, ci han fatto dare negli eccessi più dannevoli del lassismo e della malignità. — Al lassismo poi dovea concorrere quel vero metodo di discussione, che si dice casuistico, dove si rompono i nervi alla morale, e per la farragine e la minuzia delle applicazioni si falsa il giudizio. — Alla maligna ambizione di soffocare, e disperdere i contraddittori non potea soccorrere altro metodo fuori del contenzioso, dove sciupando l'ozio e la forza intorno a punti accessori e di niun rilievo, si turbavano gli Stati, si offendeva la carità, e si trascuravano gli errori vivi dell'empietà dominante. Così discorri, così sentenzii.

Poche cose sono dunque a verificarsi intorno alle dottrine gesuitiche: 1.° Il principio. — 2.° I metodi o le forme. — 3.° I frutti, che ne siano risultati. — E tu mi aiuterai a guidare chi vi sia nuovo, e brami di vedervi il bene e il male. E primieramente quanto al principio niuno vorrà sognare, che il Probabilismo o il Molinismo sian nati senz'altra legittima attinenza nelle scuole gesuitiche, da quel solo intento di paganizzare il dogma e la morale, ossia di ridurre le idee, e la legge cristiana alla misura delle anime volgari e pigre.

Cerchiamo il principio remoto, che ha condotti a questi sistemi, esaminiamone il principio intrinseco e costitutivo. Io intendo di ciò fare senza impegnarmi ad altro, fuorchè ad una ricerca imparziale del fatto filosofico.

Chi t'interroghi, tu risponderai meglio di me, che il principio comune donde muovono così il molinismo ed il Probabilismo come i sistemi delle altre scuole è essenzialmente dialettico, antico, e tende alla sintesi delle reciproche relazioni di Dio, Creatore, e della creatura libera, della legge sovrana, e dell'arbitrio individuale.

La rivelazione ci porge i due estremi anelli del mistero, e ci impegna per sua propria autorità a credere, che il segreto nodo, che li congiunge è degno così della sapienza, della bontà, e della potenza di Dio, come della nobiltà dell'uomo.

Ma fu perpetua cura della meditazione dell'uomo il raccogliere da ogni canto e dalle dottrine rivelate, e dalla propria ragione, e dall'intima esperienza quella maggior copia di luce, che lo conducesse più avanti a scorgere quell'armonia di relazioni, che ha da compiersi con l'eterna felicità.

E comechè la Chiesa custode della rivelazione, e più sollecita dell'osservanza de' doveri indubitati, che non delle speculazioni, onde si pasca la presunzione dell'intelletto, non abbia mai cessato di vegliare alla difesa del dogma, contro le sentenze che ne avessero alterato l'integrità, essa però consentì sempre all'istinto con cui i santi Dottori, tratti com'erano e dalla propria pietà, e dallo zelo di soddisfare a menti irrequiete, progredivano nella ricerca d'un nesso plausibile tra la dottrina del potere di Dio sopra l'opera dell'uomo, e quella del potere dell'uomo rispetto all'

zione, e della pratica. E per un canto e per l' altro fu chi procedette più saviamente, chi meno conforme alla misura della discrezione, con che seppe trattenersi dal concludere definitivamente la sua sintesi, in una materia dov' è impossibile il far precedere un' analisi compiuta delle singole parti del mistero.

Dovette però naturalmente avvalorarsi il metodo analitico, per fare d'ogni proposizione apposto studio come d'un tutto, con solo rispettare le sue attinenze alle altre, e i suoi fini prescritti all' umano intelletto.

La qual suddivisione di sistemi, o di ricerche parziali, benchè recasse con sé alcun danno (1), era però una legge logica, una necessità dello spirito umano, e una via al progresso verso il nodo dialettico avuto costantemente in mira.

Ora fra i punti capitali a discutersi e a meditarsi ne' due campi del dogma e della morale, furon avuti questi come e più vicini al gran nodo, e più fecondi di conseguenze.

1.º Per qual via Dio giunga a predisporre la distribuzione delle grazie all' uomo, con cui si prometta infallibilmente di condurre l' individuo ad operare il bene, senza però violare la sua natia libertà?

2.º Quale sia l' obbligo, o il diritto di un uomo rispetto ad una legge la quale non gli sia così indubitata da non restargli buone ragioni in contrario?

E poichè i Teologi della Compagnia non eran niente indegni di concorrere alle loro meditazioni al migliore scioglimento di siffatti problemi (che già non essi avevano create, ma diremmo veramente erano squisito frutto della filosofia cattolica nella più sublime del perpetuo suo lavoro), anch'essi andaronsi dividendo quale più valeva un sistema quale verso l' altro, senza affrettarsi alla gloria di costruirne un nuovo e tutto lor proprio, che è la gara de' mediocri.

In morale essi trovarono già intenti i Dottori di altri istituti a sciogliere la questione della legge dubbia — già i teologi Domenicani insegnavano (2), che ove non fosse probabile un' azione non esser vietata, benchè rimanesse ancora probabile il divieto, l' uomo è libero di prendere il partito che più gli aggrada, obbligandosi di fare virtuosamente, cioè con retto fine, ciò ch' egli decide di fare. Onde presa ognora più a considerare questa dottrina, a svolgerla, a prevederne le

(1) Col suddividersi gli oggetti di coteste speculazioni accadde, fra gli altri danni, che si può ben dire così, che chi attendesse più specialmente allo studio di una parte avesse meno riguardo alle altre, e alla reciproca loro armonia. Quindi è che non pare per anco essere generalmente sentita l' analogia, che corra tra un sistema abbracciato nell' ordine speculativo e quello che secondo lo stesso principio dovrebbe preferirsi nella Teologia morale. Bañes e Molinista, autore del sistema detto Tomistico, intorno alla Grazia, è in morale probabilista, ed erano probabilisti quasi tutti i Teologi, specialmente Domenicani, quando i Gesuiti entrarono nella lizza; nè certo erano perciò Molinisti. — E Molina stesso, che poi fu sì inclinato a dare il possibile luogo al principio di libertà nelle opere della Grazia, si mostra piuttosto indifferente che inclinato al probabilismo. — Ma un tal fatto, cui ci è dato di osservare in uomini, i quali pure non mancavano di scienza né di dialettica, gioverà per avventura a tener alquanto sospeso l' opinione di chi voglia scorgere tra il probabilismo ed il molinismo una connessione maggiore di quella che sia, — e a rimuovere tanto più il sospetto, che l' uno e l' altro di questi sistemi siano stati creati per mire straniere alla scienza teologica.

(2) Mi piace di citare fra questi un testimonio, il quale vale per molti; il P. Pietro de Medina (*Summ. Part. 2, tr. 2 e 22*) dopo aver asserito: *ser licito que el juez siga la opinion probable dexando la mas probable*, la qual proposizione egli condannerebbe al peccato, noi, dopo che la santa Sede a tutela de' diritti del terzo la volle proscritta, aggiungeva: *sentencia* (e tanto più s' intende la massima generale) *tiene el Maestro Medina, y Ora y muchos Doctores, particularmente los discipulos de Santo Thoma*. — Si può veder in questa *Questione di fatto* del P. De-Champs, specialmente nella ristampa fatta dal Zaccaria

ca, anzi necessaria al procedere con discreta misura di libertà, divenne fra loro più comune.

Ma il qualunque favore incontrato dal Probabilismo nelle scuole della Compagnia fu pura conseguenza della libertà, con cui fu lasciato discutere. Sicchè il difendersi, che fece questa dottrina dovendosi alle proprie ragioni di lei, e niente ad alcun' autorità nè di statuto, nè di ferma consuetudine, già toglierebbe che si potesse avere per così assurda, o tale che ci dovessimo far premura di dichiarare quanto la Compagnia sia lontana dall' averla per sua propria.

Sia detto però a migliore schiarimento del fatto, e a lode della discrezione, con cui quest' Istituto professa di procedere rispetto alle opinioni disputabili: 1.º La Compagnia ha dichiarato di non avere il Probabilismo per sua dottrina — ed esser lecito ai suoi l'impugnarlo. — 2.º Parecchi teologi di quest'Ordine l'hanno di fatto impugnato di proposito (1). — 3.º Quando alcun Vescovo ne vietava l'insegnamento nella sua Diocesi, i nostri Professori si astenevano dall'insegnarlo.

Ma qui sarebbe pur a distinguersi il Probabilismo dal Lassismo. Il Probabilismo ridotto a certi termini è questione astratta, e da potersi sostenere secondo le leggi della logica. Il Lassismo non è che un'estensione abusiva del Probabilismo, ossia logica esagerando il valore della menoma probabilità; ossia nel giudizio pratico, stimando più o men probabile l'onestà d'un atto quando a considerarlo bene rinchiude un vizio, od un pericolo per cui sarebbe a definirsi illecito. — Ora il Lassismo come principio dottrinale, o teoria, non prese mai piede nelle scuole, nè pur potea; mentre dovendo fondarsi logicamente, col solo assumere di legittimarsi, sarebbesi condannato da sè. Al più nelle decisioni riguardanti alla pratica, sfuggirono di penna ad alcuni probabilisti sentenze isolate intorno all'onestà di questa o di quell'azione, dov'era fra la troppa incertezza de' principii, o delle autorità, che fossero ad aversi sotto gli occhi per ben definirla, inclinarono soverchiamente alla parte più benigna.

Ma questa sorta di errori, niente sistematici, e che non procedevano da altra cagione fuorchè dal non iscorgersi in materie oscure, intricate, e rimaste fino allora più o meno dubbiose, l'intima ragione, che valesse per l'affermativa o per la negativa di questa sorta di errori, dico, cadendo sopra materie meno prossime ai primi principii di cristiana morale, eran lungi dal formare comeccchessia un corpo di dottrina lassista — un insegnamento speciale e proprio *ex professo* de' Gesuiti.

E tanto è vero; che quando l'Università di Lovanio, fatta una scelta di proposizioni più o meno condannabili, in materie morali, domandò che Roma le proscrivesse, e Roma le proscrivesse di fatto, quali erano presentate, male si apposero i Gesuiti e i Protestanti a volerne menar trionfo a scorno della Compagnia, quasi fosse caduta nella medesima condizione che loro. — Poichè nè molte fra le proposizioni condannate giacevano precisamente negli autori della Compagnia in quella forma, che era colpita dalla censura — nè tanto meno eran essi o primi, o soli, o tutti ad opinare intorno ad alcuna di quelle materie nel modo, che veniva proscritto, ma com'essi avevano sentito altri teologi di altre scuole e della stessa Lovaniese; — nè finalmente fu veduto, che a guisa di uomini radicati per sistema nell'errore abbiano mai preteso di proseguire l'insegnamento, o di prendere la difesa d'alcuna delle proposizioni cui la santa Sede avesse tolta l'apparenza di probabilità. — Ma anzi per quel medesimo principio del nostro istituto, che raccomanda ai teologi di starsi alle dottrine che più sian conformi all'insegnamento comune nella Chiesa Cattolica; per quel medesimo principio di autorità e di obbedienza onde si fa pure, ove occorra, un rimprovero all'

(1) Tra questi Rebello, Comitolo, Camargo, Elizalde, Gonzalez, Muniessa, Estrix, Schilder, Ebreatreich, Bonet, Gisbert, Simonet, Antoine cc.



ossia peggio di morale rilassata? — Il Probabilismo è un sistema tuttora disputato nelle scuole cattoliche, nè la Compagnia l'ha punto creato, o adottato per suo. — Lassismo si riduce ad errori isolati, condannati, abbandonati, e non pure sì nostri, sì imperdonabili, che prima della lor proscrizione non avessero; presso uomini insensati d'ogni scuola, sufficiente apparenza di verità. Laonde nè il teologo, nè lo storico possono quindi inferire, che o il nostro Istituto, o tutto l'Ordine in corpo, e tuttora meno l'attuale Compagnia di Gesù meriti perciò alcuna macchia d'infamia.

Or saremo punto più colpevoli nella questione dogmatica pel Molinismo? — Intorno al modo di conciliare l'opera della grazia divina col libero arbitrio si era puramente progredito a diverse conclusioni assai prima, che i Gesuiti vi ponesser mano. Ma il sistema concepito in questa medesima mira dal P. Molina paruto plausibile a' colleghi dell'autore, nonchè a varie Università di Portogallo e di Spagna, passò pure per alcun Decreto che ne ordinasse mai l'insegnamento, ma per la semplice via di scientifica discussione a prevalere in questa o in quella cattedra — nè tuttora così generalmente, e immobilmente, da vincerla sopra il sistema modificato di Suarez, il quale per altro suppone anch'esso la scienza media. — Ciò che contribuì in gran parte a far credere che la Compagnia professasse il Molinismo, fu l'impegno, in cui si trovò condotta a difenderlo contro la taccia di eresia; ma altro è il difendersi da sì grave condanna una dottrina che si intendea di poter professare liberamente; altro è il vincolare la propria libertà per professare esclusivamente quella dottrina a preferenza delle altre, che sian di pari peso. — Col primo la Compagnia adempiva un debito così verso la Chiesa e verso la scienza, come verso il proprio onore — il secondo è troppo stolto a concepirsi, nè i superiori, od i teologi dell'Ordine giunsero mai a tanto. I superiori non intesero, che a tenere in freno le dispute, che potessero nuocere o alla venerazione dovuta ai dottori precedenti, e delle varie scuole, o alla carità fraterna; i teologi non intesero, che a serbare la conveniente libertà di discutere le varie opinioni, e di insegnare quella che a ciascuno risultasse più dimostrabile. — E perchè il debito del professore richiede troppa altro di più grave e di più essenziale, non è questa sorta di discussioni, queste venivano per lo più affidate alla stampa, mentre l'insegnamento nelle scuole si rivolgeva a stabilire i dogmi, e a dare a ciascun sistema opinabile tanta luce che bastasse a dirigere il discernimento de' giovani.

Certo a terminare la questione del Molinismo non basta lo scherzare sopra le voci di *scienza media*, e non accadrà per questo ai Chierici studiosi, che, ove cerchino presso qualsiasi nostro la semplice esposizione, abbiano a rappresentarsi la dottrina della *Concordia* per un semenzaio di sofismi (1).

Potrei pur qui far osservare (chi sapesse apprezzare quel sublime contenuto degli intelletti cattolici nelle più alte regioni della metafisica e della fede, sotto l'infallibile censura della Chiesa) che fra i sistemi teologici in qualunque materia, v'ha più sicuro dei due così dibattuti fra i PP. Domenicani ed i Gesuiti, alla presen-

(1) Il Molinismo in quanto sostiene e difende nella spiegazione delle opere salutari la grazia la scienza media, ha troppi lodatori e seguaci anche fuori della Compagnia, perchè ci molto temere de' tuoi e degli assalti di qualsiasi altro impugnatore. Conta a' suoi difensori e titanti dei teologi religiosi d'ogni regola, non eccettuato il dottissimo Ordine Domenicano. Poco lungi da' nostri giorni il P. Albertini professore pubblico a Padova, lo difese e propin in voce e a stampa nelle sue Acroasi. La Sorbona massimamente agli ultimi tempi v'era inclinata, e il Billuart scagliò contro il Tournely, quasi lanciotto d'ingiuria, il titolo di *Dominicanus molinianus*. È vero che in un'opera italiana, i più in leggendoti, non sapendo del Molinismo non potranno a meno di non restarne malissimo di noi preoccupati. Se tale fu il tuo disegno che io non creò, Dio teli perdoni.

il Molinismo altrimenti (1) che come un' ipotesi scientifica, di tanto valore però, che la Sorbona istessa nella sua censura dell' *Emile*, non ebbe altra migliore, con cui rispondere alle difficoltà di Rousseau. — Anzi mi basta l' aver il Molinismo, e in una dottrina del probabile, anche sol per un fatto, il quale segnò nella storia dell' umana intelligenza e della fede un' epoca di prodigiosa attività, sotto l' alto impero di quel principio dialettico e cattolico, il quale domina in tutta la teologia, chiamando a congiungersi nella ricerca del vero e del bene lo studio della tradizione e l' opera dell' intelligenza, la ragione e l' autorità.

Il Molinismo pertanto, ed il Probabilismo non furono mai altro fuorchè opinioni libere ad insegnarsi come non così remote dal comune sentire — ma appunto perchè liberi, ancor disputabili, e da potersi combattere.

Si proseguì di fatto a disputare *hic inde*. I campioni di altri sistemi notaron agevolmente, che queste due opinioni non erano perfettamente dialettiche e conciliatrici perchè pareva prevalere in esse il principio della libertà umana sopra i sovrani diritti del Creatore; ma quale era eziandio nelle opposte scuole il sistema, in cui i sovrani diritti del creatore, non paressero dominare a danno della libertà individuale?

*La connessione del Molinismo, tu dici, colle principali eresie fu avvertita da molti* ( Proleg. p. 154. nota ). — Ma finchè non tieni per definizioni dogmatiche quelle della scuola tomistica o agostiniana — dovrai aggiungere, che la connessione de' sistemi di queste scuole con altre principali eresie, fu altresì avvertita. Ma io dirò meglio, non connessione, piuttosto remota analogia, perchè se fosse *evidente*, che le conseguenze dirette di un' opinione scolastica si *connettono* con l' eresia, non c'è nè Tomista, nè Agostiniano, nè Gesuita, che si possa scusare con quella buona log

(1) Non può un privato senza mettersi in opposizione colla Chiesa e arrogarsi un diritto che non ha, censurare e riprendere, come alcuni fanno, un sistema, cui essa lascia libero alla discussione delle scuole. I Domenicani a spiegare il mistero dell' efficacia della grazia ricorrono all' onnipotenza, i Gesuiti alla scienza divina, gli uoi e gli altri cattolicamente, e le censure e note d' ogni genere che ne toccassero l' ortodossia, finchè la Chiesa non sentenzii, sono vietate espressamente. Clemente XII nel decreto *Apostolicae Providentiae*, dell' anno 1733 intimato a tutti i fedeli, dopo d' aver approvate e confermate le lodi date da' suoi predecessori alla scuola Tomistica, soggiunge queste parole: *mentem tamen eorumdem praedecessorum nostrorum contra peritam habentes nolumus aut per nostras aut per ipsorum laudes Thomisticae scholae delatae, quas iterato nostro iudicio comprobamus et confirmamus, quidquam esse detractum caeteris catholicis scholis diversa ab eadem in explicanda divinae gratiae efficacia sentientibus, quarum etiam erga hanc sanctam Sedem praeclara sunt merita, quominus sententias eas de re tuae pergant, quas hactenus PALAM et LIBERE ubique etiam in huius almae Vrbis luce docuerunt propagarunt. — Quamobrem fel. record. Pauli V. et aliorum praedecessorum nostrorum restinguendum dissentionum fomitem vestigia persequentes et saluberrima mandata renovantes auctoritate quoque nostra omnibus et singulis superius expressis interdiciamus et prohibemus sub eisdem poenis ne vel scribendo vel docendo vel disputando vel alia qualibet occasione nota aut censuram ullam theologicae eisdem scholis diversa sentientibus incurrere, aut earum sententiarum CONVITIIS et CONTUMELIIS incessere audeant, donec de eisdem controversiis haec sancta Sedes aliquid definiendum ac pronuntiandum censuerit etc.* Ma nè Giansenisti, nè fautori di Giansenismo era da aspettare che ubbidissero: crebbero le accuse e le più odiose imputazioni, massimamente soppresso l' Ordine, al tempo del Sinodo di Pistoia, finchè la santa Sede v' interpose il suo giudizio, solennemente condannando fra le altre l' asserzione del Sinodo, posta sotto il n.º 79, *quod CONVITIIS et CONTUMELIIS insectatur sententias in scholis catholicis agitatae, et de quibus apostolica Sedes nihil adhuc definiendum aut pronuntiandum censuit*, colle note di *Falsa, Temeraria, in scholas catholicas Iniuriosa, debita apostolicis constitutionibus obedientiae Derogans*. Può bene dentro i confini della moderazione un sistema cattolico controverso nelle scuole essere impugnato, ma non è lecito, salva l' obbedienza ai decreti della santa Sede, trascorrere a vituperarlo, come farebbersi di un sistema già condannato o poco meno, dicendone il peggio che si sa con ingiurie e maledizioni, arma dei deboli, inutile alla buona causa, che non ne abbisogna, inutile alla cattiva, cui fa sempre peggiore.

troppo più severa. — O se a giudicare bene conseguenze di alcuna opinione va-  
logica de' fatti, vedremmo, che fu troppo più facile agli Antimolinisti il passare  
numero sotto le bandiere di Giansenio, che non ai Gesuiti il prevaricare dalla ca-  
ca professione verso la parte opposta.

Restò adunque indeciso il valor dogmatico di qualsiasi soluzione recata  
le varie scuole, tolto che erano sostenibili fino a maggior progresso nel risp-  
vo svolgimento.

Onde a chiudere questo primo punto della presente discussione rimane so-  
ritenersi, che il principio, de' due sistemi, di cui vuoi farci vitupero è sovrana-  
filosofico — lungi del sapere di panteismo tutto verte sopra il dogma di creazi-  
applicato così all' opera della grazia, come alla legge; questi sistemi non solo ric-  
scono la perfetta distinzione del Creatore, e della creatura libera, e ne cercano il  
so e l' armonia, ma nel determinarne le relazioni possibili a concepirsi stanno  
rosamente nei confini del dogma cattolico — finalmente per quel tanto che si di-  
guono dagli altri in favore della libertà umana, non si può dire, che rinchiudano  
principio funesto alla morale, nè alla civiltà, ma anzi un principio secondo di  
vario e nobile esercizio del naturale discernimento in ogni relazione e in ogni op-  
zione della vita.

Vediamo ora in secondo luogo quanto i Gesuiti abbiano per avventura pec-  
ne' metodi, o nelle forme del discorso, con cui presero a svolgere le dottrine  
giche.

Il casismo era il precipuo modo di trattare ordinatamente la morale. —

La polemica s' impossessò della speculazione.

In verità questi due soli stromenti non sarebbero bastati alla teologia, ma  
dei dissimulare, che di fatto non eran nè pur i principali nelle scuole cattoliche  
i Gesuiti fra gli altri concorsero con immenso lavoro a far progredire la scola  
con pari nobiltà di forma, e vigor di dialettica.

Vuoi tu far credere al mondo, che tutta la teologia speculativa, in quanto  
braccia col dogma la morale teorica, si riducesse dai Gesuiti a contendere sop-  
Molinismo ed il Probabilismo?

O i dotti che leggeranno queste tue pagine avranno da compatire un par-  
che parli della teologia de' Gesuiti, mostrando di ignorare fra i tanti nobilissi-  
Suarez, il Bellarmino, il Petavio, il Gretsero, un Diego Ruiz, un Valenza sì l-  
ni dall' ispido scolasticismo, e sì pieni di soda dottrina, tutta acconcia ai tempi  
renti?

Sì, però la polemica entrò a partecipare all' opera degli studi teologici, ma  
mi di grazia, chi se ne sarebbe dispensato in quell' età? o quale delle parti la  
ad uso meno onesto? e non ha essa in sè un prégio, che l' associa ai successi  
filosofia e della letteratura? — La quotidiana polemica de' nostri giornali abbia-  
me un abuso, e un tralignamento di quell' arte, ma i suoi principii ancorchè in-  
nelle prime scritture teologiche, dirozzatisi di giorno in giorno, e presa veste  
urbana, la condussero dalla forma dell' invettiva, fino a quella de' giornali scien-  
non senza decoro delle moderne Accademie. — Che se a giudicare de' passi fatti  
la Compagnia in questa via, altri volesse paragonare le *Memorie di Trévoux*  
fogli periodici della parte opposta, non dubito, che ossia per la dignità ed urb-  
de' modi, o per la sincerità del discorrere, o per l' onore della verità, non fosser  
le per parergli troppo superiori a questi. —

Tu vedi pertanto, che non inclino per anco a lagnarmi con troppa amar-  
di chi ci fu cagione di entrare per questa via. — Ma il fatto è, che quanto a  
sistemi di cui discorrevamo ci fu pur forza di prenderne la difesa con vig-

Permettimi di citare due esempi o tre fra un' inondazione di libelli quale tu sai, che ci si versò adosso dal canto de' protestanti, de' giansenisti, e di molti Dottori cattolici di diversa scuola.

Ne scelgo uno, che si riferisce ad una questione dogmatica, benchè vestito d'un pretesto cercato nella condanna, che Innocenzo XI fece di 65 proposizioni in materie morali. Il Papa condanna quelle proposizioni *ut jacent*, cioè nel senso e nel valore, che hanno sotto le espressioni, in cui giacciono nel decreto istesso. E voleva dire, senza cercarne alcun autore, o censurarlo perchè alcune di esse eran pinttosto concepite di fresco e ridotte dai Teologi denunziatori a formola precisamente dannabile, che non trovate nei trattati a stampa. Or ecco dunque in trionfo i giansenisti, e prestì a pubblicare un bell' indice di moralisti Gesuiti, i quali condannati nelle loro proposizioni, doveano, al dir di costoro, trovarsi nel medesimo caso, che Giansenio per la condanna delle sue (*V. Confutatio Triumvirorum — a Witthelmo Sandaeo Maguntiae 1680*).

Ora non sei teologo per pensare, che a que' tempi, e in quelle materie, e con tanti provocatori, che si succedevano, e fattosi il volgo partecipe della lotta, fosse debito de' Gesuiti il tacere. — Ma il solo discutere quell' impostura vedi che brigata essa era? Ell' era un ripigliare tutto in una questione di dogma, di morale, di bibliografia, di storia; questioni inutili sì a chi facea retto uso del buon senso e degli occhi; ma volute da chi godea di crear tenebre onde coprirsi, e avvilupparvi i semplici.

E l' accusa di pelagianismo, o di semi-pelagianismo era essa da lasciar correre? Mal apposta al sistema di Molina, e a tutta la Compagnia non provocava le difese? E ove quelle provocazioni avessero pur avuto una tal apparenza di verità da costringere i Gesuiti a dare maggior precisione ad un sistema teologico, era egli dovere di vietare alla scienza un lavoro non indegno di lei?

Ma il più duro e frequente assalto, che la Compagnia abbia avuto da sostenere fu intorno al Probabilismo, e più ancora pel preteso Lassismo, che da quello si diceva introdotto nella morale gesuitica. — Qui menavan trionfo i Giansenisti, cui l' abilità di Pascal avea procurato il vantaggio di mutar condizione, prendendo da accusati, che erano nel dogma, la qualità di accusatori nella morale. — Se non che il loro trionfo non potendo riuscire completo, ove si fossero contentati di accuse giuste, le troppe calunnie, che vi aggiunsero, le false citazioni, le insinuazioni di dottrine riprovevoli per eccesso di rigorismo, il continuo intento di far valere la dannata eresia dovettero eccitare i Gesuiti a sostenere la lotta con una moltitudine di scritti, i quali attestano ancora al presente l' ardore, che serviva da ambe le parti.

Chi non bramerebbe, che tanti ingegni atti a troppo migliori imprese, non fossero mai discesi in così miserandi conflitti?

— Ma fa bel dire a noi: perchè cavillare sopra una proposizione di un autore? perchè non confessare, che suoni in un senso equivoco? perchè ostinarsi a portare la macchia d' una morale riprovevole, mentre sarebbe stato sì nobile la sola risposta d' una vita santa, e d' un pubblico insegnamento conforme alla dottrina cattolica? — Il perchè non è certamente nel gusto, che i Gesuiti avessero a siffatta battaglia. — Ma nella posizione dov' erano stretti a difendere non già tanto Escobar o Castropalao, ma e la morale cattolica, voluta trascinare a principî, ch' essa riprova, — e il diritto di servire la Chiesa contro l' ipocrita eresia.

Perchè il P. Noceti va egli dietro alle centosessantasei accuse, che il Concilio accumulava contro i teologi della Compagnia sopra altrettante false citazioni di testi o troncati, ora stravolti? (*Veritas vindicata* Lucae 1754, Matriti 1756). Per la medesima ragione che avea mosso il P. Billuart, quell' esimio lume della scuola Domeni-

combatteva con le armi fornitegli dall' altrui mala fede per la setta giansenistica, chè anche attribuendogli la lode, che il Concina gli dà di essere *ut plurimum* tissimo nelle citazioni de' Gesuiti ch' egli censura, gli manca ad esimerlo dalla di calunniatore quel tanto, ch' egli concede se non al suo genio, a quello di guidava — ora alterando i testi, cui reca in prova, ora soprattutto imputando Compagnia dottrine manifestamente contraddette dal comune insegnamento di la denunciando sopra infedeli allegazioni, un' intenzione formalmente concepita Compagnia di corrompere la morale (1).

Le nuove provocazioni, a cui tu discendi col ricordare que' tristi conflitti mi trascineranno qui a ripigliargli da capo. Io ti rispetto abbastanza da non credere, che tu abbi voluto ridurre la causa della Compagnia al giudizio, che sinua Pascal. Le sue *Provinciali* saranno per molte generazioni un monumento suo ingegno, un modello di polemica satirica, e se così vuoi un raro lavoro di — Ma come documento da dirigere alcuno nel giudizio, che debba fare della gesuitica, non è uomo imparziale e studioso, che lo accetti. È libro fino dal principio comparire per sentenza della Chiesa e anche del poter laicale improntato con sua d' infamia, cui nè abuso di eloquenza nè opera di partito potran mai cancellare. Dovettero confutarlo i contemporanei; e questo è ciò solo, ch' io intendo qui ricordare, mentre tu li accusi di aver perduto il tempo, e smarrito il secolo dietro questioni inutili. Per loro era a difendersi primieramente la fama di tutto l'ordine stamente chiamato reo di opinioni, già comuni a dottori di altre scuole, o di cate, o già emendate, o per sè innocenti. — Per loro era a dimostrarsi, che la Compagnia sincera nel progresso degli studi morali guidava i suoi teologi a dar se maggior precisione alle dottrine de' precedenti, e lasciate alle scuole le opinioni minor corso nella vita usuale, insegnava ai fedeli la sola dottrina comune. — Per loro era da svelarsi le arti, con cui sotto pretesto di far la guerra al Lassismo, si u a salvar l'eresia. — Per loro finalmente era a difendersi l'innocenza di non autori ingiustamente calunniati.

Son viete per noi ed insipide le questioni volutesi mettere in campo da Pascal da' Giansenisti intorno alla Simonia, all'atto di contrizione, al peccato filosofico equivoci, e tu fai saviamente tacendone per rispetto ai tuoi lettori. Ma ne' tempi cui scorriamo quelle erano, grazie al fervore de' moralisti di Portoreale, e de' poli di Giansenio, la più squisita cosa da imbandire al pubblico, trovando essi per di cent'anni sempre nuovi condimenti da rendergliela saporita. E sarà colpa di suiti, d'aver partecipato al gusto comune?

Sarà colpa de' Gesuiti l'essersi obbligati a ripetere sempre nuove proteste onore del vero e della giustizia, per quanto tempo gli avversari vollero abusar voce e della penna, per sedurre i semplici, o per stancare i giudici?

Tu ci richiami però a tener conto speciale d'una questione, che si collegava naturalmente così a quella del Lassismo, come al dogma, e divenne immenso sp dove niuno correva con più diletto, fuori quelli appunto, che non potevano, e volevano vedere dappresso le difficoltà. Voglio dire la grande controversia de' nesi e Malabarici terminata da Benedetto XIV. — Ma da te ricordata come per noi d'infamia, non solo per l'empietà de' riti, che avremmo approvati, ma la morte cagionata da noi al Cardinale legato.

(1) Intorno alle falsità accumulate nelle *Provinciali* i miei lettori possono consultare ni, cui ne dà con linguaggio imparziale il Sig. Créineau-Joly. *Hist. de la Comp. de T. IV* p. 43 et suiv. 1.<sup>re</sup> édit. 1845.



siano i veri termini di essa.

Che alcuni di que' riti potessero aversi per puramente civili, e serbarsi da' Neofiti senza macchia d' idolatria, era opinione non de' Gesuiti soli, nè di essi tutti, ma seguita siccome da parecchi Gesuiti, così da parecchi Missionarii dell' Ordine di S. Francesco, e di quello di sant' Agostino, anche in grado di Vicari apostolici. Mentre l' opinione contraria vanta appunto per primi sostenitori il P. Longobardi ed altri della Compagnia menzionati dal Bartoli. — Le decisioni di Roma volute sempre appoggiarsi a regolari e sufficienti informazioni uscivano con molta prudenza e lentezza, concedendo il possibile a tollerarsi, e dando luogo alle prevenzioni de' Gentili, de' Neofiti e degli Europei di dissiparsi coll' andare del tempo. — In ogni particolare materia, che venisse con precisione ordinata da Roma, i Missionarii obbedivano prontamente, ancora col pericolo di perdere le nascenti cristianità; — nè quando rappresentavano i motivi, per cui fosse da differirsi alcuna decisione, o innovazione, ciò facevano altrimenti, che di concerto coi Vescovi di quelle parti, e questi appartenenti ad altri Ordini religiosi. — I Missionarii Gesuiti aprirono al Cardinale di Tournon, come poscia al Mezzabarba l' ingresso all' India e alla Cina per l' esecuzione degli ordini pontificii. — Lo stesso di Tournon attesta nel suo primo decreto che i due Gesuiti P. Bouchet, e P. Berthold gli prestarono ogni assistenza per venire a quella prima condanna, che egli faceva de' riti idolatrici. — E finalmente se lo zelo del Legato non si condusse al cospetto de' Cinesi, o de' Vescovi, con quella misura, che era a volersi per le mire della santa Sede, onde giunse ad incontrare dolorose tribolazioni, con lui ne portarono il peso i Gesuiti istessi, stretti fra quelle angustie indicibili, che nascono tra il conflitto delle autorità, e i doveri per ogni parte pieni di pericolo (1).

Ma era sì bello il poter accusare i Gesuiti d' idolatri, di ribelli, di avvelenatori, che Jurieu tra i Protestanti, e i Giansenisti non vollero lasciare fuggir l' occasione. Singular cosa però è questo zelo degli eretici per l' obbedienza dovuta al Papa! Il fatto è che Papa Innocenzo XI non a costoro si mostra riconoscente, non a loro esprime alcuna fiducia, ma commenda in un Breve del 3 dic. 1681 il P. Verbies Vice-Provinciale della Compagnia nella Cina, e *con esso i suoi Compagni*. Il fatto è, che quel delitto de' Gesuiti si manifestò agli occhi di chi è usato a veder da lungi ne' Gesuiti altrettanti scellerati, la Chiesa romana non giunse mai a ravvisarlo in cent' anni di continui esami, tanto le circostanze de' luoghi meritavano particolari considerazioni, tanto eran nei Missionarii e note le virtù, e divise le opinioni. — Il fatto è in somma, che a veder chiaro, fuori d' ogni studio di parti, in questa questione, che tu tronchi in due parole a nostro danno, non è documento nè più ricco, nè più fedele, nè più autentico della Bolla de' 12 settembre 1744 di Benedetto XIV. — dove ripigliando da capo la narrazione di tutto il lungo dibattimento, e recando tutti gli atti della causa, termina bensì col proibire cotesti riti, ma senza biasimo, che accenni specialmente i Gesuiti, o tanto meno l' intiera Compagnia, e attestando anzi d' aver tra le mani i loro giuramenti di obbedienza.

Che se di più abbiamo riguardo a' molti elogi, con cui il medesimo Pontefice torna in altre sue Bolle a commendare la Compagnia in generale, od in particolare i suoi Missionarii, non ci resta più dubbio intorno alla lor fedeltà, e abbiamo la più legittima norma di carità e di giustizia, con cui sarebbe oramai a ricordarsi quella sì dolorosa parte della nostra storia (2); carità e giustizia implorata dal sangue di tanti

(1) V. Réponse au livre intitulé: *Extrait des assertions*, etc. t. III.

(2) V. *Des Jésuits par un Jésuite* (P. Cahour) 2. part. ch. 4. 5. 6. 7. — Paris 1844, dove è raccolta ogni notizia, che intorno alla questione de' Riti cinesi e malabarici dovesse appagare un avversario qual è M.<sup>r</sup> Quinet.

descritteci sotto gli occhi di Pio VI dal celebre Missionario Carmelitano P. P. da S. Bartolomeo, il quale narrando il trionfo di chi ottenne di strapparle agli Gesuiti, deplora uno zelo, che non seppe altro, fuorchè voler emulare sotto massime di religione i disegni e gli effetti dell'empietà, per abbandonare all'ignoranza l'oppressione, all'apostasia tante cristianità già fiorentissime (*P. Paulin. a S. thol. — Indie Orientali cristiane — p. 199 — Roma 1794*).

Proseguo l'esame de' metodi tenuti nelle Dottrine teologiche. — La Pol. prevaleva quanto all'universalità delle materie. — La Casuistica avea per isoggetto le materie morali.

Il metodo Casuistico, te lo confesso ancor io, non è mai stato di mio genio: quasi sarei per abbandonartelo, siccome credo che farebbe chiunque stia in fuori l'esercizio pratico del Ministero. — Ma sai che nascono pur parecchi con quel della pratica, il quale ha ancor esso il suo pregio, tu sai che il più e meglio de' sacerdoti è impegnato per uffizio ad addestrarsi alla seria applicazione de' principii, e d'ogni legge ecclesiastica e civile ai casi diversi di chi cerca da loro consiglio. Ora il Casismo, intendo come metodo, fa per loro; onde vedi che non è a dirsi del tutto — ma anzi loro dev'esser stromento a buon servizio della Chiesa. Questo metodo infatti può esser paragonato a qualsiasi altro esercizio, per cui scienza viene applicata all'arte. Le matematiche sono applicate alla meccanica: un metodo che può corrispondere al Casismo in Teologia. — Che se aggiungiamo che questo metodo perfezionò l'ordine logico delle materie morali secondo la ragione e le attinenze de' principii, la scienza istessa gli andrà debitrice di un non picciol provento. — Se aggiungiamo poi che nella Compagnia lo studio de' casi forma la menoma parte del corso teologico, nè dee misurarsi dagli enormi volumi compilati in aiuto solo de' Pastori e de' Confessori — non ci accuserai d'esser di professione. — Che se la Compagnia ha lasciato che giusta la medesima professione, cui tien dietro nelle scuole lo studio della morale, alcuni suoi professori pubblicassero i frutti da loro raccolti in questa parte, mentre i tanti altri adoperano in simil modo a pro del dogma, o delle scienze naturali, o delle lettere, non ch'essa abbia abusato degl'ingegni (1).

Ciò che tuttavia mi preme qui maggiormente è di notare, che dell'esser alcuni Casisti in soluzioni indiscrete (che è stato un tributo pagato all'umanità dalle scuole d'ogni Università cattolica, e d'ogni Ordine benchè illustre) è tanto a biasimarsi il metodo stesso; ma anzi vera cagione dell'errore fu solo non applicare sempre esattamente il metodo giusta le proprie leggi, a tutte le parti della questione. Poichè consistendo la Casuistica nel decidere degli obblighi che costringono in certe circostanze, più o meno complicate, e questa decisione esigendo l'applicazione de' principii naturali e delle leggi positive, divine ed umane, giusta le varie che interpretazioni de' SS. Padri, de' Concilii, dei Magistrati o dei Dotti, egli è manifesto, che se l'applicazione riesce a pronunziare sentenze o troppo severe, o troppo larghe, ciò non può avvenire per colpa dell'arte in sè stessa, nè dei suoi metodi, ma per colpa o per inavvertenza di chi l'esercita — e non ebbe l'occhio alle guide per seguirle, o alle circostanze del caso per notarle, tutte. — E chi volesse di codeste inavvertenze, o di codeste colpe far vergogna o a chi vi cadde o a quelle Accademie, a quegli Ordini religiosi, cui siano appartenuti, autori di proposizioni riprovate, vorrebbe prima a maravigliarsi che in tanta abbondanza di materie; e spesso p

(1) Vcdasi la difesa de' Casisti dell'Abelly.

gnamenti.

Resta dunque solo che io chiuda queste considerazioni intorno alle Dottrine gesuitiche, ai loro principii, ai metodi ed alle forme, coll' esaminare i frutti che ne sono risultati.

Tu ci rendi *le debite lodi* quando dici (Proleg. p. 151) che *lodevole certo nelle scienze sacre fu il mantenere inviolata la libertà delle opinioni contro chi voleva menomarla o distruggerla; lodevole il contrastare a certi teologi arcigni e di malumore che inseverivano di soverchio, e rendevano intollerabilmente acerbo il dogma cattolico.*

Ma poi eccoci colpevoli perchè piacque a Biagio Pascal, o ad altri di darci per quegli scandalosi, che rappresentavano e mettean in voce l' *Uomo Dio, come un moralista men puro e santo di Epitteto e di Cicerone.* — Egli però, il faceto, e quello che dava occasione ai pusilli, ed agli eterodossi di prendere sì grave scandalo. Egli veramente il quale o dissotterrava dalla polvere opinioni dimenticate, ritrattate, o peggio travisava il senso de' nostri autori. — A noi restava bensì la lode difendere l' Uomo-Dio dal vitupero, mostrando che la morale per noi insegnata, come nome suo, o consonava perfettamente con quella di tutta la Chiesa, e della maggior parte de' suoi Dottori, o era interamente sommersa alle sue decisioni. E quando fosse rimasto in mente a taluno, che di fatto eravamo scandalosi lassisti, l' Uomo Dio avrebbe ancora ricavato gloria, a quel medesimo modo, ch' egli seppe, nel portar prima di noi una laccia somigliante. Che è a dire: la causa di quella morale benigna, sostenuta sotto il peso delle calunnie con la purità del vivere, con la pazienza non meno che con l' evidenza delle ragioni, si sarebbe dimostrata tanto più straniera ai principii di Lassismo; perchè il Lassismo, che rallenta il freno agli appetiti non virtù da opporre alla persecuzione; o si sgomenta, o si fa lecite le armi disoneste; la quale dove se i Gesuiti hanno risposto come Gesù Cristo con ragioni atte a soddisfare, se più nell'esser, com' Egli guardati quali scandalosi, hanno tuttavia serbato in quell' ammirabile miliazione il decoro, la modestia, e lo spirito di carità, dovette farsi manifesto a anime ingenuie, che que' religiosi non erano nelle loro dottrine guidati da alcun interesse, o da alcun principio immorale, ma dallo spirito di Gesù Cristo medesimo. — Osservo soltanto, che anche dopo estinta la Compagnia, la Chiesa amò la dottrina de' Gesuiti; un santo Missionario e Vescovo, non meno esperto del Ministero, che erudito in Dritto canonico ed in morale Teologia, la corroborò con la sua autorità; e la fiducia, che quella autorità ispira giustamente, prevale a poco a poco al sistema di rigorismo voluto da altri stabilire con tanto impegno a danno delle coscienze. — Osservo che sant' Alfonso de' Liguori non solo tolse per suo testo il trattato del Busebaum, ma volle che andasse innanzi a tutta la sua grand' opera un trattato preliodinare di mano d' un altro Gesuita, e lo ebbe dal P. Zaccaria, che apposta lo compisse. — Osservo, che la santa Sede anche indottasi per le note cagioni a sopprimere la Compagnia parve assumere di onorarne, e camparne qual miglior frutto la sua dottrina morale, continuando a volere, come per lo innanzi, al posto di Teologo della sacra Penitenzieria un Gesuita. — Angeri (sotto Clemente XIV.) Stoppini, Bolge Marinowich, Giorgi, Muzzarelli, Arévalo, Zauli, sino al presente P. Zecchiuelli, e suo sostituto P. Van-Everbroeck son tutti della Compagnia. — Dopo di che non comanderò se possiamo consolarci delle satire di Pascal, e della tua recente filippica; ma sì, se la Chiesa ed il cielo potevano concorrere più efficacemente ad autenticare una scuola, e voler meglio indirizzate le coscienze.

Quello, che accadde rispetto alla morale non sarà meno evidente rispetto alle dottrine dogmatiche. Il molinismo non fosse valuto ad altro fuorchè ad esercitare e C



ed alla scienza non sarebbe stato sì dispregevole. — Ora tant' è, che mentre il giansenismo sì abile a velarsi sotto ogni maschera, or di austera morale, or di politica, or di pietismo e or di sacra erudizione, ed a sviare in intricati laberinti di questioni accessorie i campioni cattolici, sapea nascondere la bruttezza del suo dogma, sì facesse illusione a una gran parte del clero, e de' dotti — una gara destata fra i cattolici intorno ai sistemi possibili ad opporsi all'eresia riuscì a mostrare quale più l'accostasse, e a quali condizioni questo o quello potesse giovare in favor della fede. — Che se volesti dire che l'odio del molinismo è quello che ha consigliato a cattolici teologi di correre più disperatamente al giansenismo, certo faresti maggior torto a quella teologia di que' disperati, sì mal ferma e governata dalla passione, che non ai molinisti, rimastisi almeno fedeli cattolici.

Non so veramente se la civiltà del secolo al cui tribunale tu citi la Compagnia voglia tener gran conto di questi frutti, ch'io ricordo qui come proprii ed immediati delle controversie accese in tempi già da noi rimoti intorno al Molinismo ed al Probabilismo.

— In verità la questione non appartiene tanto al secolo, quanto alla Chiesa. E la Chiesa non ha avuto a dolersi delle dottrine della Compagnia, ma di quelle dottrine di fazione eretica, la quale accendeva tutte le gare; e sol, che il secolo si ricordi che le dottrine cattoliche sono base sicura della morale, e della civiltà, sol che si ricordi che la teologia *arcigna, e troppo severa non essere in armonia con le inclinazioni benigne del cuore, nè col sistema cristiano*, esso vorrà non esser ingrato alla costanza, alla fermezza, alla pazienza, con cui tanti ingegni nobilissimi di questo istituto si lavorarono in questo ingrato conflitto.

E ove anche fra questi conflitti molti colpi siano andati indarno, e siasi levata molta polvere, resta che per esser giusto il secolo veda quante altre fatiche, la Compagnia sostenesse nel medesimo tempo, e quante conquiste procurasse di più immediato e sentito vantaggio alla civiltà.

Non furon quelle appunto età fiorenti d'ogni utile disciplina? — E vi fu forse straniera la Compagnia? E non diede essa allora in tributo alle lettere, alle arti, alle scienze, opere degne di qualche gratitudine?

Non furon quelle appunto le età, in cui la Compagnia consacrò maggior numero de' suoi religiosi ad ogni opera di carità, in tante novelle istituzioni?

Od erano vani sofisti, ostinati propugnatori di lassismo que' tanti Missionarii urbani, o rurali, i quali, come i Regis, o i due Segneri, scorrevano con infinita fatica ed in istrettissima povertà le Province di tutta Europa, e operavano sì maravigliosa riforma de' costumi?

O fu sì gran piaga in seno alla Compagnia questo o quell'altro suo sistema teologico, mentre pur serbava essa vigore da creare tanti Apostoli e tanti martiri a p. dell'Inghilterra, di tutto il nostro eretico Settentrione, degli scismatici di Russia e di Grecia, e di tutta quanta l'estensione de' due continenti, ove uomini accesi di carità e senza interesse di mondo sian potuti mai penetrare a bandire il Vangelo?

Da questo operare, e dai fatti di virtù, di scienza, di gloria, che ne sian testimoniati alle nazioni d'Europa giudichi il secolo, se le dottrine teologiche de' Gesuiti sian un tanto sciupar le forze degli ingegni, o uno sviare la civiltà dalla sua carriera.

Non sarò io di quelli, onde tu abbi a tener rimprovero per le poche pagine consacrate alla Misticità, là dove discorri d'incivilimento.

Nè Tacito solo o Cicerone ti danno il diritto di considerare le ceremonie sacre, ma so che avresti pur voluto aggiungere a questo proposito, che così la divina legislazione dettata a Mosè, come la perpetua Sapienza della Chiesa Cattolica insegnano con pari autorità a riguardare ogni parte del culto religioso qual oggetto di sommo rilievo, non meno in ordine alla vita sociale, che rispetto alla gloria di Dio.

Ti seguirò dunque di buon animo ; e in prima benchè non mi sappia pur definire con precisione la così detta Misticità, l'intenderò qui giusta il tuo senso, come una qualsiasi esaltazione della pietà, onde avvenga alla fantasia, o agli affetti di esagerare le conseguenze d'una verità religiosa a pregiudizio del concerto, che dee serbare tra il mondo specolativo e il mondo reale, tra la religione e la natura, tra la contemplazione e i doveri della vita attiva.

Or non è dubbio, che questo non sia un morbo fatale alla Società — e tanto più quanto invadendo le facoltà interne dell'anima, e fra queste le più bollenti, o le più dispotiche regolatrici degli atti esterni, i civili ordinamenti non giungerebbero a porre riparo, fuorchè da lungi e per vie indirette.

Alla misticità può rispondere nella parte esteriore della religione un culto superstitioso.

Or il culto è tutta un'educazione popolare ; il culto è un vincolo sacro di società ; il culto quasi corpo della religione è quello, per cui essa entra nel commercio esteriore della vita, ed in contatto col mondo civile.

Si alteri il culto ; non solo i dogmi, o la religione sono in pericolo, ma ne saranno compromesse le dottrine morali, e la civiltà.

Perciò è stabilita, e riconosci l'autorità de' Pastori custode e giudice del culto, così quanto alle forme, come quanto allo spirito. Non già per costringere la spontaneità degli affetti, nè perchè il rito debba esser invariabile, o tanto meno perchè non debba avere del popolare, e abbondare di eloquenti immagini, ma perchè non possa essere nè de' privati, nè del volgo, nè dell'autorità civile il discernere fin dove un'innovazione qualunque introdotta nelle cose religiose sia per condurre le menti ed il costume.

Perciò ancora, a prevenire fin dalla radice ogni alterazione intorno alle religiose osservanze vuolsi principalmente attendere all'insegnamento assiduo e preciso di tutta la dottrina Cattolica, e converrebbe toglier di mezzo alla Società quell'ozio, quel torpore, che scioglie il freno alla fantasia, e consacra come religione la noia della vita, l'odio della luce, la pusillanimità, la misantropia, ed altri simili eccessi di misticismo.

Ma sappi, che fin qui noi siamo con te in perfetto accordo — e se credevi questa materia doverci rimproverare qualche errore o qualche abuso, mai non avremmo messo in dubbio i principii, bensì ti avremmo pregato di considerare se veramente da quelli discordassimo nel fatto in sì brutta maniera, da farne vizio comune di tutta la Compagnia.

Tu trionfi agevolmente mettendo in bella luce, e corroborando con ogni dovizia di prove le dottrine cattoliche, alle quali ci richiami — e i tuoi lettori che in quell'impegno ti vedono così acceso e così felice, ne conchiudono per avventura, che siamo pur oltre modo ignoranti od impudenti ad esigere da te la dimostrazione di elementi sì chiari. — Ma essi non badano, che già intorno a quelli per noi è risposto *concedo, concedo majorem*. La minore del tuo sillogismo, quella è che importa ;

gioia mosi d'averli sconosciuti o rinegati. Ma perchè il fatto, tu lo hai per si rario e perpetuo e universale da non crederli più in debito di dimostrarlo, e chi legge lo vede affermare sì francamente, l'uno e l'altro vi affrettate a conchiudere: che i Gesuiti son quegli stolti, que' superstiziosi, que' nemici della religione e della patria, ec. ec. Resta però che questa conclusione posa sopra il falso supposto di fatti possiamo negare.

Se vogliamo adunque considerare i fatti, che si dovrebbero riferire alla mistica, od alla superstizione, e tu affermi di noi in termini così universali, non so che altro fuorchè o atti particolari da potersi prendere così in bene, come in male, o discrezione di qualche individuo non partecipata da' Superiori o da' Colleghi, o nuzie da lasciarsi all' arbitrio di ciascheduno, o anche fatti non nostri, ma cui ti piace di involgere fra le cose gesuitiche, per ciò solo, che ti sanno del farisaico, del natico, dell' irragionevole (1).

*Le persone colte* avran dunque avuto indubitato argomento da dover biasimare qualche funzione di Chiesa, qualche Missione, qualche Processione, o simili atti di pietà popolare, cui dirigesse alcun Gesuita? Or sii persuaso che se di fatto era lui a censura, quel gesuita non avendo operato secondo i fini della Chiesa, si discosta in quel caso dallo spirito della Compagnia; e questa ne è innocente.

Tu vorresti, che il culto e l' imitazione de' santi fossero tenuti per ciò che debbono essere rispetto al culto di Dio, e allo studio della virtù. — Ma se tu guardi al fine universale della Compagnia, non è forse altri, che più di lei diriga la pietà de' fedeli ad onorare la persona ed i Misteri di Gesù Cristo, a meditare le verità eterne, a raccogliere da maggior varietà di santi esemplari un' idea più universale di virtù che si confaccia a tutte le condizioni della vita..... Quanto poi alle forme di santi che diresti del medio evo, io credo che siccome non convengono proporsi sole per un universale modello, così però si collegano al bisogno ed al costume presente, e cronologicamente e moralmente parlando quell' età si collega alla nostra (2).

Non so se fra gli abusi che tu intendi di notare nella religiosità gesuitica voglia per avventura accennare una certa ricercatezza d' arte e di lusso, onde profanarsi le cose sacre, o più doversi compiacere la vanità, che non lo sp

(1) Un tuo cenno (*Proleg. p. 157. lin. 10, 15*) pare qui riferirsi alle processioni e ai pellegrinaggi de' cattolici in onore della S. Tonaca del Salvatore venerata nella Cattedrale di Colonia, dove tolse occasione di manifestarsi l' apostata Ronge. — Ma certo non hai da involgarizzare i Gesuiti in questi fatti. Nè essi permetteranno tuttavia, che in quelli si censuri da altri che da' Pastori, cui ciò appartiene, alcuna apparenza di superstizione o di fanatismo, la quale possa aver si per cagione anche indiretta dello scisma, che ora inquieta la Germania. I Gesuiti onorano con quella misura di fede che conviene il pietoso deposito, insigne per tanti miracoli — essi han reso a Dio un tributo di gratitudine per due guarigioni ottenute prodigiosamente a favore di due convittori di Friburgo per mezzo di reliquie d' un' altra veste del Nazareno che si custodisce in Argenteuil, in Francia. — Ma non poterono partecipare ai movimenti delle provincie del Reno, dove non hanno nè residenza, nè relazioni d' alcun momento.

(2) Cercando però di quali santi od illustri personaggi sia piaciuto ai Gesuiti di questi ultimi anni di scriver le vite, trovo che, oltre ai continuatori de' Bollandisti, i quali intendono di fornire con isquisita critica i monumenti più autentici intorno ai santi d' ogni età, il P. Prat scrisse la vita di S. Ireneo, il P. Carminati ristampò corredata di note ec., una Dissertazione del P. Zaccaria intorno ai martiri tebei venerati in Torino — il P. Narbone, diede la vita di S. Lucio Papa, il P. Filippo quelle di Santa Rosalia, del B. Agostino Novello, del Ven. P. Lanusa, altri di Francia e d' altre parti le biografie di persone di varie condizioni, che si segnarono per eminenza di virtù nell' quest' ultimo secolo — cosicchè scrivendo per lo più o di santi antichi o al tutto moderni mi pare non si siano discostati ne' loro studi agiografici da' principii, che tu ci vorresti proporre. Nè mi discernimento vedo nella scelta de' libri, che compongono le Biblioteche de' convittori, ec. o si distribuiscono ad altri — cercandosi che tra i santi modelli siano proposti ad ognuno quelli, che convengano al suo stato.

vra fare il Gesuita : che dee la Chiesa, o lo Stato ? Certo lasciare, che ognuno segua il suo discernimento; sol che riferisca sinceramente il suo culto in ossequio di Dio, e al culto accoppia lo studio delle virtù.

Vorresti forse accennare il tanto spandersi di medagliette, di coroncine, di scapolari, di reliquie, di immagini sante ? le tante forme di nuove preghiere, o di osservanze proprie alle pie Congregazioni ? la fede, che prestisi ai prodigi ottenuti per mezzo di quegli oggetti, o di quelle pratiche ? la virtù, che loro si attribuisca di espiare i peccati, o di assicurare la salute dell' anima ?

Sappi però, che la Compagnia non è poi così dedita a queste cose da aversene per la creatrice o promovitrice indiscreta. Quegli oggetti li tiene per indifferenti, o per sacri, secondo che sono per vario rispetto riconosciuti dalla Chiesa. Que' prodigi, li ha per veri, o dubbî, o supposti, conforme risulta dalla critica, o da' giudizi ecclesiastici. Quell' efficacia spirituale, non la commenda fuorchè ne' termini della dottrina comune. E perchè il genio, che i fedeli hanno per siffatte cose fa sì che per una parte la pietà Cattolica ne possa ritrarre alimento, e per l' altra sviarsi ed infievolirsene, la Compagnia non approverebbe quello fra i suoi Sacerdoti, il quale con la mira al solo bene da sperarsi, non avesse riguardo al pregiudizio che se ne può temere.

E qui se guardo alle regole che la Compagnia s' impone intorno al sacro culto, la vedo professare espressamente uno studio di somma conformità alla pratica della Chiesa romana, una forma di culto più semplice, di quella che piacesse ad alcuni di imporle, un culto più di spirito, e di opera, che non di riti e di esteriori osservanze.

Bensì potè avere aspetto di novità il gran promuovere, che fece fin dappprincipio l' uso frequente de' Sacramenti ; ma la Chiesa non riconobbe altro in ciò, fuorchè il perpetuo suo proprio voto. — Bensì la Compagnia parve segnalarsi sempre per un culto affettuosissimo d' ossequio e di fiducia verso la Madre di Dio ; ma il santo impulso dato da' nostri teologi, e dai nostri Missionarii a questi sensi stette lontano dalle esagerazioni, e fu secondato dalla pietà universale. — Bensì coll' adottare e promuovere un culto speciale verso il cuore dell' Uomo-Dio, essa diede occasione a certi censori di accusarla qual novatrice ed idolatra, ma la S. Sede approvò quel culto, e appunto fra le luttuose vicende, nelle quali la Chiesa più non si giovava dell' opera della Compagnia, i Pastori ed i fedeli amarono pur di cercare più che mai in quel cuore adorabile espiatione, speranza, rinnovamento di fervore.

Ma qual' è del resto l' ascetica propria de' Gesuiti ? O se la pietà Cristiana e ortodossa ammette varietà di forme, se vi si osserva secondo i tempi il successivo predominio di idee, di affetti, di usi diversi, qual' è la forma di spiritualità, o di riti esteriori, che abbia preso a dominare dopo istituita la Compagnia ?

Per non diffondermi in questo genere di erudizione più che nol comporti il secolo, io ti farò solo osservare che per opera di S. Ignazio e della Compagnia prese a spandersi l' aureo libro *De imitatione Christi* ; e dello spirito di quella potrai arguire quale sia l' indirizzo che diamo alla nostra pietà, e alle persone che vogliono essere da noi guidate.

Aggiungerò, che il principale trattato di spirituale perfezione onde sogliamo giovarci fin dal Noviziato, e ne' nostri Ministeri, è quell' opera del P. Alfonso Rodriguez, che passata fra le mani di tutti i religiosi, e in tutti i Seminari, e lodato ancora da Nicole, ti guarentisce abbastanza la discrezione e la sodezza della dottrina, che rinchiude.

Nè voglio risalire più oltre fino al gran codice di spiritualità, che è per la Compagnia il libro degli *Esercizi* di S. Ignazio.

*Pellico.*

(Parte I.); tutto fu comprovata la sua bontà dall'esperienza di tre secoli; finalmente è commendato dalla S. Sede, — che ove altri ci voglia incolpare di mistici, o corruttori del culto non dovrà mai più recarne in prova gli insegnamenti che abbiamo in quel libro. — Ma anzi aver quelli per buoni, e provare se può non ne facciamo uso.

Certo almeno, se pur avessimo dimenticato S. Ignazio per Molina, se ai così cattolici del nostro fondatore avessimo sì veramente sostituito le dottrine probabilistiche, niuno che del Probabilismo, o del Molinismo ci facesse colpa, potrebbe attribuirci nè quel misticismo, che smorza la natura, nè quella servilità e picciolenza di spirito, che si lega al culto materiale. Perocchè la professione di queste dottrine tra i confini della verità cattolica, vale da sè sola quanto la più possibile libertà di spirito, sotto la sola autorità di Dio, e la sì larga e benigna direzione della Chiesa.

Ma sia che si vuole de' principii professati dalla Compagnia in ordine alla cristiana — io ti invitava a stare ai fatti. Ora, dico io, se la Compagnia, con i suoi esercizi, e con tutti i mezzi di influenza, che le furon dati, concorse di fatto per una parte nel modificare le idee e le pratiche comuni della pietà cristiana, e pur riconoscere che essa secondò fedelmente quello che tu avresti per istinto della Chiesa, e vero progresso dello spirito umano informato dalla grazia soprannaturale. L'Opera di Dio fu certamente, e della Chiesa l'introdurre che da due secoli si fece. La pietà dei fedeli e il rendersi comune ad ogni classe di persone una maniera di pietà più ricca, e più confacente alla vita domestica e civile. Ma singolare maestra di questa pratica fu evidentemente la Compagnia. — Essa in particolar modo insinuò e diffuse la pratica dell'orare mentalmente, d'esaminare ogni dì la coscienza, di prendere l'un dopo l'altro i proprii difetti per espugnarli con apposito studio, di sorvegliare le proprie deliberazioni per nobilitarle con fini superiori. Lungi essa dall'essere nata, o schiava delle forme sensibili, fu accusata di troppo semplificarle — ma in ciò andava d'accordo con lo spirito universale della Chiesa, e una maggior semplicità e semplicità nelle funzioni sacre diè maggior campo all'istruzione, e agevolezza al culto di spirito e di verità, diretto alla pratica delle virtù, schivo delle singolarità esteriori.

A ciò tendevano le sue Congregazioni, e per esse i semplici fedeli, e le famiglie secolari si penetrarono di uno spirito cristiano, discreto, socievole, dove la pietà si trovava in armonia con tutti i doveri e con tutte le circostanze.

In ciò fu mirabilmente secondata da quanti uomini santi la provvidenza diede prima alla disciplina di lei, e furon quindi maestri di pietà, e Pastori e predicatori a comune edificazione della Chiesa, fra i quali basti menzionare S. Francesco di Sales.

Nè a contrastarle un compiuto successo ci volle meno de' fieri assalti, cui dovette sostenere in prima dalla pietà giansenistica, e poi dal libertinaggio regnante, cui le fu sì impossibile il conciliare mai i proprii principii, che prima consentì a divenir vittima della violenza.

Ora ch'è risorta alla sua missione lascia ch'essa riconosca il secolo, chè non è pur esso ben fermo; — lascia ch'essa si tenga soprattutto in armonia con la Chiesa, e col popolo fedele; lascia ch'essa raccolga il deposito del passato, che non è da perdere, se vogliamo un avvenire di saviezza e di fede. — Non è sorda la Compagnia alle ammonizioni ancor de' filosofi; ma non pretendere, che queste servano per canoni dogmatici o disciplinari. — E tanto più persuaditi, che siccome la pietà cristiana si collega con la condotta della coscienza, ed è nata ad animare la pratica della divina legge, così la pietra di paragone, con cui si abbia a giudicare del bene



Non si può terminare la questione del giovare, che faccia la Compagnia co' suoi ministeri al progresso della moderna civiltà, se qui non discorriamo più di proposito delle attinenze, che stringono quest'ordine agli stati particolari. — E prima giovi prender le mosse dalle attinenze naturali dell'universale sacerdozio cristiano con tutti i popoli, cui abbia a reggere nell'ordine della civiltà.

Ogni principio universale è nato ad attuarsi nelle varie conseguenze, o dipendenze sue in quelle forme più particolari, onde l'una si discerne dall'altra.

E oltre a questo suo stringersi, e quasi immedesimarsi, ch'esso fa con ciascuna di loro, sino a nascondersi per così dire sotto le forme, che sono lor proprie, è tanto più vero, ch'esso ha con loro un medesimo essere, quanto la verità di lui è quella che loro dà consistenza e vita e vigore.

Ciò posto non è assurdo il concepire, che se il sacerdozio cristiano, è principio universale di civiltà, comunque sia esso costituito indipendentemente dalla costituzione civile delle diverse nazioni, in ciascuna di esse però diversifichi il suo aspetto, le sue operazioni, sino a presentarsi come diviso in tante forme distinte, e in tanti corpi diversi quanti sono gli Stati, e le Provincie.

E qualunque sia la distanza, o l'indipendenza di ufficii, che in ciascheduno Stato divida l'ordine sacerdotale dal laicale, sarà ancor vero però, che il primo sta al secondo come il principio di eterna giustizia sta alle leggi particolari, come la fede cattolica sta all'opera della ragion naturale, come la carità universale sta all'amor patrio, e agli affetti domestici, in quella più intima relazione cioè, che rende il Sacerdozio essenziale alla civiltà.

Ma poichè il sacerdozio cattolico, uno qual è, si diversifica tuttavia alle diverse cure che gli son proprie, in modo da procedere come diviso in varie schiere di forme e di uffizi distinti, accaderà che tale di esse schiere compaia nata ad immedesimarsi maggiormente nell'estrinseche relazioni con ogni particolare società civile, e tale altra ritenga più visibile la sua universalità.

E infatti il Sacerdozio Pastorale, quanto si confa alla sua nativa indipendenza, s'immedesima, per così dire, per ogni lato coi popoli tra i quali si riporta (2).

(1) I cattolici sapranno apprezzare il *manifesto giudizio*, che la Santa Sede esprimeva or sotto tre anni intorno al perpetuo indirizzo seguito dalla Compagnia nelle cose di spirito.

« L'inclita Compagnia di Gesù, che sempre produsse uomini sommi nelle scienze divine, e molto illustri nelle umane, educò anche costantemente distintissimi servi di Dio, i quali coll'esercizio di tutte le virtù, toccarono l'apice della santità. In questi ultimi tempi si deve a ragione ascrivere fra questi il Ven. Giuseppe Maria Pignatelli, nato della prima nobiltà di Saragozza in Aragona, il quale fattosi simigliantissimo allo stesso Fondatore della Compagnia S. Ignazio di Loiola, ed ereditandone lo spirito, risplendè per tanti e tali esempi di virtù, che ben a ragione deve dirsi dato da Dio a bene, salute, e preservazione della Compagnia per le vicissitudini de' tempi da tante e sì gravi calamità combattuta: e benchè sempre cagionevole, conservato dalla Provvidenza fino alla vecchiezza, acciò che potesse facilmente istillare nei posteri la prima e domestica disciplina ec. » (Decret. Beatificationis et Canonizat. Ven. Servi Dei Josephi Mariae Pignatelli Sacerdotis Professi Societ. Jesu 30 Sept. 1842). — Vittima dell'espulsione della Compagnia della Spagna, il Ven. P. Pignatelli fu il Superiore de' Gesuiti rimessi privatamente da Pio VI in Parma, poi ristabiliti da Pio VII nel 1804 in Napoli, e morì a Roma nel 1811 — formando per così dire l'anello intermedio, che lega in uno la Compagnia presente coi santi perpetuatisi nel suo seno fin dalla sua Fondazione.

(2) Non ho qui lodi che bastino a commendare il rispettabilissimo ceto de' Parrochi, i cooperatori più immediati del ministero pastorale, gloria del clero secolare, spettacolo sempre vivo in ogni diocesi, e più ai giorni nostri in Italia, in Francia e in Germania, di una virtù mode-

cittadino.

Il Sacerdozio militante od apostolico, che si dica, è quello che partecipando o meno, secondo i diversi suoi istituti, alle condizioni dell'ordine pastorale e del monastico, mantiene da un canto più sentito il carattere di universalità, e dall'altro varie ed operose le sue relazioni con ogni classe delle società civili.

Or però se queste diverse forme di Sacerdozio, si dividono siffattamente i muni attributi non per altro se non per metterli in esercizio con maggior efficacia tutte sono *in solidum* benemerite di ciascun popolo, presso cui si adoprano: se concorde operare, cui sono condotte dal Sommo Sacerdote, si rendono insieme accio stromento di civiltà, non meno che di eterna salute, non consente il buon diritto che si imputi a difetto di alcuna di esse, ciò che pel migliore servizio della Società in generale ha ceduto alle altre.

O forse che il soldato, il commerciante, lo scienziato, i quali si discostano o meno dai comuni doveri di famiglia, o di cittadini, e si dividono così distintamente i principali uffizi che concorrono alla difesa, alla ricchezza, alla gloria della patria non hanno da partecipare alla sua riconoscenza?

O non è lode del Sacerdozio pastorale, come de' religiosi, l'essersi isolato siffattamente dal comun modo di vivere che rifiuti di partecipare al traffico, e si leghi al sacro celibato?

O chi rimproveri allo stato monastico la solitudine, che lo toglie al consorzio de' concittadini, — allo stato apostolico lo scorrere di sede in sede, la perdonerà il cielo pastorale?

Chè la condizione di questo essendo di stanziarsi ripartitamente in popolazioni diverse, anch'essa può aver inconvenienti suoi proprii, e quelli di ciascuna diversa condizione si devono supplire coi vantaggi di tutte insieme collegate in opera.

Ciò dunque mi condurrebbe a pensare, che se il Sacerdozio in generale è essenzialmente congiunto coll'essere, e col progredire della civiltà di qualunque nazione, ogni nazione può noverare i suoi Sacerdoti fra la classe de' cittadini suoi benemeriti — e con meno riguardo alle attinenze personali di nascita o di stanza, adottando tutto in uno per figli e per veri padri tutti coloro che, comunque dividano tra sé il sublime ministero dell'istruzione, de' Sacramenti, e della carità cristiana, formano insieme un ordine solo d'uomini consacrato all'utile di lei, anzi quell'ordine necessario all'intima costituzione della patria.

sta, attiva, ornata di sacro sapere, accessibile ai pusilli, rispettata dai potenti. — Per opera loro fondate o animate tante scuole, tanti ospizi, tante istituzioni benefiche — colla loro efficacia difeso il buon costume, sostenuto il buon ordine domestico e civile — nelle ville migliorata l'agricoltura, illuminata l'industria, consolato le fatiche e i sudori della gente la più abbietta forma non pertanto la più necessaria ai bisogni della vita. — Qual santità di vita, quali opere apostoliche zelo in un S. Vincenzo de' Paoli, in un S. Giovanni Canzio, in un B. Fourier, in un Abelly, Ollier, Acerbis, Morcelli, Bellotti, Vuarin! — Qual eroismo di carità ne' disastri delle guerre, di peste, di carestia! — qual costanza e generosità sino a sacrificare in pro delle anime loro affidate sangue e vita! Dei diciannove martiri gorcomiensi i tre erano parrochi. Sono tuttora nella memoria di molti e ne' fasti della Chiesa di Dio gloriosi i nomi dei Comteaux, Nolhac, Gros, Royer, Etard, Bessin coi cento altri immolati dal furore e dall'empia armata della rivoluzione francese. — E il nostro Piemonte vede anch'egli con soddisfazione i suoi andar sull'orme del B. Odino Barotti e del Ven. Giacobini nelle fatiche di un apostolo così utile, e freschi sono ancora gli esempli d'ogni virtù di quel ministero nei Toschi, nei Genovesi, nei Davico, nei Compeyre, nei Ferlosio e in altri che furono o sono la gloria e l'ammenda de' loro parrocchiani. Sono poi ordinariamente i Parrochi gli amici veri dei Religiosi, costantemente chiamati a parte delle loro cure nell'opera soprattutto degli Esercizi spirituali e delle sacre missioni, e ne fan fede le vite di S. Alfonso, del B. Leonardo, del Ven. Baldinucci, del B. Segneri, del Pinamonti, del Tommasini, del Monti e di tant'altri instancabili missionari.

luno può credere.

La morte civile, cui il religioso si sottomette spontaneamente, è più un rinunciare ai diritti onde il cittadino ricava utile, che non ai doveri, con cui dee giovare maggiormente. — Esso rinunzia infatti al diritto di possedere in proprietà alcun bene di fortuna, e di contendere con chicchessia nel vantaggiare i proprii temporali interessi ; — egli abbandona il suo patrimonio alla famiglia, o ai poveri concittadini, e le sue speranze a chi gli voglia succedere nel comune arringo, dove tutti faticano per arricchire, — e qualunque sia il conto, che gli si voglia domandare delle sue braccia sottratte al lavoro, egli offre in compenso dottrina, esempj di virtù, l'opera d'un mediatore presso Colui, ch'è il principio d'ogni bene. — Quando uno Stato non riconosca i privilegi, che distinguevano giusta le antiche costituzioni il religioso dagli altri cittadini — egli dal canto suo assume schiettamente tutti i pesi, e si mette al comune livello, sol che salvi davanti a Dio il suo impegno di non aver interessi proprii, e di stare congiunto di volontà, con chi ha preso per guida della sua coscienza. Come uomo privato egli rispetta, ed adempie tutte le leggi di buon ordine, che governano lo Stato — come uomo di pubblica professione, egli esercita quella, che gli era libero di eleggere dietro la scorta della gran maestra che è la Chiesa, ed elesse una di quelle che possono esercitare una più salutare influenza. — Non è morto pertanto in sì vero e disgraziato modo, che non si debba anzi dire più vivo di molti altri cittadini a pro della patria — tanto più vivo, cioè, quanto più dato alle opere di spirito, — tanto più inteso al ben di tutti, quanto meno sollecito del suo vantaggio privato, — tanto più utile al comune, quanto consacrato a un ministero più essenziale alla conservazione, e alla diffusione de' sommi principj sociali.

Ma il Gesuita non è anco fatto straniero alla patria col mettersi nella condizione di poterla abbandonare per sempre ? Non cessa egli di amare e di rispettare le patrie leggi, poichè si fa suddito d'un capo straniero ? — Così mi pare che si discorra di tali, che non dovrebbero pure confondersi coi ragionatori volgari.

Chi è dunque quel capo straniero ? — forse un Principe rivale del mio Sovrano ? forse un nemico della mia patria ? o passo io ne' suoi dominj a intraprendere una carriera di servigj, i quali mi tolgano al debito, che ho verso il mio paese nativo ? — Che cosa significa straniero sulle labbra di un cattolico, ove si parli di Roma e del Papa ? Ora il Generale de' Gesuiti è uno de' molti capi d'ordini religiosi, che stanno a Roma sotto la mano del Papa. — E il Papa non è il supremo capo degli ordini religiosi, in quanto è Principe, ma in quanto è Padre della Chiesa universale. — Il Padre universale non è straniero in alcun paese — e chi più si stringe a lui, più si lega intimamente all'amore di tutta la famiglia umana.

La legge poi, che il Gesuita od altro Religioso riceve dal suo Generale non è altro che una regola di condotta, che riguarda lo spirito, lontanissima ancora nelle parti, che riguardano gli esercizi esteriori, da ogni collisione con le leggi civili. tutta poi fondata sopra i consigli evangelici, e sancita così dal dritto, come dall'antica esperienza di saggi fattine in diverse maniere dalla Chiesa universale. Anzi questa legge religiosa, che ci lega a Roma è così diretta a solo fine di far regnare la legge di Gesù Cristo, e con quella ogni principio di giustizia, e di buon ordine civile, che quanto ai Gesuiti specialmente essa impone un franco, ed intiero allontanamento da qualsiasi maneggio ne' tribunali, o ne' gabinetti politici — un discreto silenzio intorno ai pubblici affari, che potrebbero diventar materia di contesa tra fazioni diverse — un riguardo pieno di carità tra fratelli di diversi paesi per isbandire ogni senso di nazionale antipatia — un estremo riserbo nell'acconsentire a prestar a' grandi l'opera del santo ministero, anche solo quanto converrebbe al più modesto sacerdote nell'ordine della coscienza. — Che se è un danno lo scemare il numero



qual proporzione egli intenda di stabilire nella vita le parti dello spirito, e quel corpo. Io ammetto, che debbano essere equilibrate, e darsi mutuo soccorso, e che l'uno superchi l'altro ivi essere sconcerto e minaccia di morte. — Ma l'Istituto religioso della Compagnia, così lontano come si tiene da' pubblici negozii, non s'atrae però alla fatica de' servigii che senza ispirar gelosia, sono di grand' utile ad una condizione di cittadini. E qualsiasi altro Istituto di somigliante vocazione, il quale faccia più straniero agli affari, che irritano l'umana cupidigia, per attendere santamente ed unicamente all'insegnare, al predicare, al consolare gli afflitti, all'animare l'esercizio d'ogni virtù, lungi dal dar a temere che scemi il vigore e il coraggio de' cittadini, sarà a benedirsi in ogni stato come elemento di vita civile.

Al rimprovero poi, che ci si vuol fare di rompere i vincoli nativi col patrio suolo peregrinando senza stanza fissa da un paese all'altro, e comparendo dappertutto come forestieri — niuno di noi è così ingrato, che sappia rispondere altrimenti fuorchè con viva commozione de' più cari affetti.

Tu ti sei fatto presso di noi l'interprete de' lamenti della nostra patria, ricordandole per noi, che i vincoli sì santi, onde ci stringeva al nostro nascere, gli affetti per la famiglia, le reminiscenze delle prime gioie, e delle prime speranze, i frutti de' lumi di scienza, la memoria di tanti esempi nobilissimi di virtù, tutto serbiamo nel cuore per beneficio suo — e ci è stimolo a rimeritarla con opere di filial gratitudine. Niun altro fuorchè un Dio potè farci consentire a non istringerci sempre più alla nostra patria con que' legami, che s'impossessano di tutta la vita. — Nè obbedire a Dio stesso prima d'aver sicurtà, ch'egli terrebbe per sacro il nostro amore verso i parenti, verso gli amici, verso la patria. — E nè anche allora potremmo dar addio a tanti cari oggetti, senza versare molte lagrime. — Ma Dio ci fa non pur forza a rispettare que' primi e sì puri affetti; e ci insegnò a santificarli, e a renderli eterni, ci, meglio che non sarebbero stati nella nostra condizione di prima. — Non si forse tornati quasi tutti in seno alla propria patria, ed educati a servirla in vari modi, e pieni d'operoso zelo per renderle, se ci sia possibile, oltre a quanto ne abbiamo ricevuto? — O se Dio ci vorrà lungi dal suolo nativo, non ci compensa questo sacrificio col dare in vece nostra alla nostra patria altri figli niente meno di noi affezionati, poichè son tutti fratelli nostri? — Nè accadrà che lungi da lei o le diventiamo inutili, o dimentichiamo il suo onore.

Ricordinsi pure i tanti che da tre secoli furon tolti quasi ogni anno alle sue patrie, e mandati per esser portati alle estremità dell'Oriente o dell'Occidente. Le diede mai alcun d'essi onde arrossire? O non ha essa ereditata la loro gloria? O hanno essi dimenticato di sempre pagarle il tributo d'ogni tesoro che lor venisse fatto di intrare?

Le lettere sacre e profane non n'ebbero ricco sussidio di ogni lume di perfezione e di sapienza? Le scienze naturali, l'economia, il commercio, avrebbero a dirsi molte loro ricchezze debitori alle spedizioni de' nostri, siccome di tanti altri Missionari? E non fu lieta l'Italia, che un suo Ricci avesse in venti anni di stentati progressi, ottenuto ai suoi trafficanti, e all'Europa uno stabilimento fin allora contrastato dalla Cina? E il Piemonte non si onora del gesuita Vagnoni che proseguì l'impresa in Persia? La Liguria non va gloriosa di Carlo Spinola, e del De Marini apostolo e storico del Turchino (1)? E dacchè i Gesuiti inviati da Luigi XIV a Pekino cominciarono la serie delle dotte corrispondenze con le Accademie di Francia, di Londra

(1) Dei missionarii nostri di Genova e di Piemonte vedasi l'appendice IX del P. C. nati nella dissertazione stampata in Torino sopra i santi martiri 1844.

Americhe non sono diventate patrimonio della scienza, e della gloria europea, finchè spianate dai Missionarii le vie, e l'Italia, e la Francia ed ogni nazione vi indirizza ora spontanea molti suoi figli, senza piangerli per ciò lontani?

O però mentre tal di noi ed ama e serve la patria, fin dai confini della terra tal altro che giunge da lidi stranieri, a prendere presso di lei le nostre veci, le recando forse troppo migliori vantaggi, che non avremmo potuto noi. Certo almeno godiamoci che qualche straniero impari a conoscerla e ad amarla come noi suoi figli, — godiamoci, che tali stranieri si fermino presso di lei, i quali già non vengono con mire interessate, ma per solo darle gratuitamente quel tanto di scienza, di virtù, di amore onde Iddio stesso li fece ricchi e li vuol prodighi ad ogni util suo.

Queste cose ripeti, o caro, all'Italia, alla Francia, patria diversa d'ognun di noi; chè tali sono i nostri sensi — e tali ce li dà quel medesimo Dio, che ce ne pare ve strappare, ma nol faceva, se non con la mira di farci meglio partecipi della sua carità infinita.

Se tu brami intanto di discutere filosoficamente e politicamente come questi sensi, e tutto per sè il nostro Istituto si accordino col sistema di individualità nazionale che sembra essere al presente l'oggetto primario di chi tratta di civiltà, — riprenderemo la questione pe' suoi principii.

Il senso di individualità nazionale si era per avventura infievolito di troppo. Già vi rianimarlo e accendere i popoli a bella emulazione di interessi e di virtù.

Certo è tuttavia, che questo punto altissimo di morale filosofia è uno di quelli che ossia a scorgerli dirittamente, ossia a proporli in termini acconci alle menti volgari, devon tenersi connessi, o tratto tratto raffrontarsi coi dettati, che per divina rivelazione sono in deposito presso la chiesa. Chè troppo è facile per vaghezza di individualità sdrucchiolare a tali principii onde s'insinui l'egoismo e il mutuo disprezzo il che sarebbe per esser funesto non meno fra le nazioni di quello, che sia tra individui.

Ora ciò, che ci preserva dallo spingere il principio dell'essere individuo e proprio d'ogni nazione tant'oltre, che si rompa l'armonia della società universale vuol esser il tener di mira i due anelli estremi delle sociali relazioni, fra i quali la patria e la famiglia formano un graduato nesso.

I due estremi dell'umana società sono da un canto l'individuo, dall'altro l'universo cattolico. — Ma la famiglia e la patria sono i cerchi intermedi di società per cui l'individuo è congiunto in fratellanza con tutti gli uomini, e col comun Padre. — Onde a quel modo, che l'individuo è fatto socievole per quel doppio principio che lo spinge per una parte a cercare chi sovvenga alla sua debolezza — e tende dall'altra a espandersi in seno ai simili, così la famiglia, così la nazione, oltre a quel che costituisce l'esser loro individuo, e le concentra ciascuna in sè stessa, soggiacciono alla legge di espansione non solo per far discendere e diramare i beni lor proprii a favore delle sfere a loro subordinate, ma ancora per raggiungere la propria perfezione comunicando con le sfere superiori; — alla quale espansione non è termine, finchè collegate le nazioni a modo di sorelle, e cittadine di una patria comune si tengono unite in concorde affetto verso Colui che tutte le riduce a Gesù Cristo.

La Chiesa cattolica sola maestra di quella sovrana filosofia, che dischiude il principio, e il fine soprannaturale dell'uomo, ha procacciato di mettere in atto questo sistema nel proprio governo gerarchico, il quale risale dal Pastore immediato, — o dai fianchi dell'individuo, o come centro di poche famiglie, al Vescovo pastore di un popolo, e per una gradazione più o men sentita di dipendenze, o di relazioni interne fra i varii Vescovi tutti li collega, e con loro le nazioni fedeli al centro dell'universo, dove siede il Pastor supremo.

dazione delle mutue attinenze degli individui, delle famiglie e delle nazioni, una analoga a quella del governo gerarchico. — E dico analoga perchè non intendo che l'ordine naturale e civile si termini come l'Ordine ecclesiastico ad un Capo supremo, ma sì che giunto a costituire le nazioni individue, tenda a seguire la sovranità della legge di unità cattolica, ritenendola sopra ogni propria costituzione, e sopra ogni proprio interesse, come regola finale, non altrimenti necessaria di quello, che le si addice per i dogmi più elementari, donde prende le mosse l'educazione dell'individuo.

Giusta siffatti principii adunque, consentiti così dalla ragione, come imposso al Vangelo, io prenderei a sciogliere i problemi che riguardano le reciproche attinenze della patria e del Gesuita.

1.° Un individuo, il quale tende ad uscire più spedito dai comuni impegni della famiglia e di patria, per estendere i suoi affetti e le sue relazioni a una sfera più universale, espone egli troppo famiglie, o alcuna nazione a volersi disciogliere, o a indebolire i naturali legami per imitare il suo esempio, il quale non può essere un'eccezione all'ordine consueto? — Coll'estendere maggiormente le sue relazioni allo scopo di carità universale, non conseguirà egli un modo di perfezione individuale che onori l'esser d'uomo, nell'ordine dell'intelligenza, e degli affetti? — Col più perfetto quanto alla direzione finale, o all'ampiezza delle cognizioni e degli affetti, non è egli condotto a scorgere, e a rispettare, e ad amare, e ad inculcare al prossimo i doveri sociali proprii d'ogni ordine particolare di patria, di famiglia e d'individuo? Finalmente per dirigere attamente se stesso al più ampio cerchio di vedute, e di carità universale, non deve tendere più immediatamente a stringersi a quel comun centro, donde solo parlano insieme tutti i raggi di verità e di amor cristiano?

Queste prime questioni mi paion provocare da se una risposta tutta favorevole all'intento, e alla direzione con cui si educa il Gesuita, e come individuo, e come cittadino.

2.° Una società d'uomini cosiffatti, la quale subordinata alle leggi della società universale, si raccolga verso il comun centro, senza sottrarre i suoi individui dal loro comun debito di cittadini verso gli stati civili, e si proponga per fine di formare a capo d'ogni nazione una scuola, un esempio, un veicolo di cittadinanza cosmopolita, non sarebbe essa un concetto sì mostruoso, da minacciare l'individualità, o, l'indipendenza delle nazioni?

Non porge essa una sicurtà sufficiente di utili servigi, dacchè posta tra le mani del comun Pastore, e sotto gli occhi dell'universo non può tradire in niuna parte il suo istituto senza incontrare da ogni lato vitupero e resistenza? Può essa volere l'equilibrio dei diritti e degli interessi de' popoli, mentre non può sussistere essa stessa se non nel proprio essere, se non in quanto universale? Può essa salire o pel proprio istituto, o per la sua diffusione all'essere di universale, senza esser condotta a sentire tutte le conseguenze dell'universale principio di carità e di giustizia? — Finalmente può essa assumere e mantenere l'essere di società così data a pro dell'universo senza stringersi, e costituirsi con tali vincoli, onde si individui anch'essi un modo di ogni società particolare? — E questo suo individuarsi, e reggersi con leggi proprie, ed il vegliare alla propria conservazione, e lo scambievole amore, con cui i suoi membri si danno perpetuo soccorso a' comuni doveri, potrà chiamarsi egoismo finchè non eccede la misura di equità e di saviezza, con cui ogni individuo, ogni comunità ha diritto di mantenere il suo essere? O se la tendenza all'egoismo è maggiore in quegli uomini, e in quelle società, che hanno meno attinto ai principii della carità cattolica, una società d'uomini formati a quest'unica scuola, non sarà ella lontana da quel brutto vizio?

cellare le prevenzioni che la dipingono come nata a vivere per sè sola, ed avversa a' diritti della patria o della carità ben ordinata.

Ma io sono condotto più oltre, nè voglio uscire dalla via, senza averti tratto come a toccare il punto estremo della questione.

L'opera della Compagnia di Gesù, non è che una parte degli attributi comuni al Sacerdozio universale. — Una compagnia d'uomini di carità universale non potrebbe essere concetto di altra mente, fuorchè di quella, che tutti raccoglie i principj ed i fini dell'umana società, epperò non è trovato di civile legislazione, ma istituzione religiosa, creazione di Dio e della Chiesa cattolica, — una forma speciale di Sacerdozio ordinato a concorrere con ogni altra qualsiasi forma, diversa a quel sovrano fine, che è di educare gli individui, e di collegare le nazioni all'adempimento della legge di Cristo.

Ma in che sta la differenza onde si discerne specialmente questa forma di sacerdotale istituto dalle altre primitive? Tutte hanno il medesimo centro, la medesima universalità — tutte si adoprano intorno ai minuti doveri, che riguardano l'educazione morale degli individui, l'osservanza delle leggi particolari, e la salute eterna. L'una però è più stretta al suolo, e ai vincoli di patria, e alla condizione diversa degli stati, in cui esercita il ministero: — tal è la forma del Sacerdozio pastorale, — laddove la Compagnia e gli altri istituti di Sacerdozio apostolico sono informati da un principio di maggior universalità, superiori alle condizioni locali.

Or dunque sarebbe a vedere in quale reciproca relazione stiano questi due ministeri secondo il vario stato, cui le nazioni vanno progredendo. Perchè se questo progresso si trova in maggior armonia con l'uno che con l'altro, o li richiede egualmente entrambi sarà facile di decidere la sorte, che conviene alla Compagnia — quanto possa sperarsi o temersi dell'opera sua così dalla Chiesa come dalla società.

E qui permettimi di risalire un momento alle prime epoche dove vediamo spuntare nella Chiesa, e massime in Europa istituti di Sacerdozio organizzati distintamente dalla Gerarchia Pastorale.

Non è egli un mistero degno di essere considerato, il costituirsi, che fa la forma di Apostolato propria degli Ordini Religiosi, a misura, che l'Ordine Gerarchico, e l'Ordine Civile sembrano dal canto loro acquistare maggior armonia e si spianano le vie a reciproche relazioni tra i popoli, e il comun centro di unità?

Eppure il fatto è incontrastabile, e per non dire di epoche più remote ed oscure a prender solo da S. Domenico e da S. Francesco d'Assisi fino all'età di S. Ignazio, tu scorgi, conforme la civiltà progredisce, e come più i popoli si stringono sotto il Governo delle leggi e de' principj, e si van costituendo le grandi e potenti nazioni moderne, e si individuano immensi Stati, e intanto con gli Stati si alza la Chiesa a maggior lustro, e pare avvicinarsi un'epoca, in cui il Sacerdozio senza confondere i suoi interessi con gl'interessi civili, tuttavia partecipi alla gloria delle nazioni — tu scorgi, dico, ne' fatti l'espressione sempre più viva d'un istinto spontaneo e de' fedeli, e de' lor Rettori, il quale promuove ogni dì maggiore la diffusione, e la varia moltiplicazione di nuovi istituti destinati ad operare fuori del ministero Pastorale. I primi contrasti che dovettero aver luogo per determinare i rispettivi confini in punto di giurisdizione, conferirono a mettere in maggior evidenza come la Chiesa avesse oramai a giovare del Clero Regolare senza discapito de' diritti, o dell'onore de' Vescovi, e de' Parrochi, anzi ad onore e servizio della causa comune. Quindi vedi ancora, che dal secolo XVI, quando fra gli assalti dell'eresia una salutare riforma ristorava lo stato interno della Chiesa Cattolica a sì alto grado di decoro, di santità, e di fermezza, non solo si moltiplicarono novelli istituti di Chierici Regolari, ma fra quelli, la Compagnia di Gesù, ancorchè più nuova nella forma e in più apparente contrasto con la

simil forma, che più e più applicasse l'opera del Sacerdozio ad ogni classe di  
dini, ad ogni necessità sociale, ad ogni specialità di più ministeri. — Finchè  
uomini, cui già pareva d'aver camminato abbastanza sotto la scorta della Religione  
vaghi di affidare oramai il progresso della civiltà alla ragione umana già fatta  
ta, vollero condurre la Chiesa a toglier di mezzo uno solo di quegli ordini mili-  
Se non che allora appunto si fece più manifesto, come non fossero ancora tro-  
bisogno. I Pastori presero da ogni parte a protestare che quell'ordine non so-  
calunniato, ma era di comun soccorso a tutto il sacro ministero.

Papa Clemente XIII raccoltine i suffragi li esprime solennemente nella sua  
del 1764. I Vescovi stessi di Francia eran percorsi a siffatta dichiarazione  
1762. — E se un irresistibile urto fu alfin concertato a sopprimere fra tutti gli  
regolari la sola Compagnia di Gesù — non fu gran tempo sola nella rovina —  
tiere Chiese perdettero fra poco il tutto.

Ma perchè progredendo la civiltà in armonia con la Chiesa, sarà per an-  
sogno di istituti regolari, i quali professino un Apostolato militante? Non è fo-  
grado la sola pastoral Gerarchia a collegare tutte le parti della cristianità col  
comune?

Io osservo in primo luogo, che al concetto di tutta l'universal Gerarchia  
desi oltre ai Pastori locali più o meno immediati od eminenti, il capo di tutti, e  
il suo Consiglio, e oltre a questo la sua milizia, e in uno quelle diverse membra-  
le quali abbia a dividere l'esercizio del suo sovrano Apostolato, e che parteci-  
fuori dell'ordin pastorale alla sola giurisdizione del Papa compongono con esso  
una sola persona, un solo potere.

Dopo ciò osservo di più, che il progresso ottenuto dalle nazioni nell'arte  
stituirsi e di regger sè stesse tende ad uguagliare per ogni rispetto la condizione  
Pastori a quelle d'ogni altro cittadino, salva sola la diversità degli ufficii.

Quelli, che prima erano stati i maestri de' popoli paghi di emulare dappoi  
ria de' vassalli, e indi a poco già con questi più o men manomessi, i sacri Pa-  
dico, serbando un triplice legame, che li stringeva al suolo, il gregge, il ben-  
il feudo, vennero col consolidarsi degli Stati, a trovarsi, verso il declinare del  
mo secolo, per mille guise d'interessi e di doveri vincolati all'essere della  
nazione. — Ogni nazione frattanto che prima fu conscia del suo essere, e del  
forza mirando a ridurre a sempre miglior armonia l'interno reggimento di sè  
sima, e a costituirsi sopra il principio d'individualità, e di assoluta indipendenza  
dò per via di transazioni più o meno sincere e felici conquistando in molte m-  
ecclesiastiche una parte de' dritti, che già appartenevano a Roma od al Clero.  
tendenza ch'io accennava è dunque un fatto antico, impossibile così ad impedi-  
me a negarsi — nè io cerco più oltre fuorchè la sola realtà di esso.

Ma posto questo fatto, e che la medesima tendenza guidi ogni nazione ad  
viduarsi in un col proprio Clero, per tal forma che ogni Chiesa particolare  
rispetto al temporale ed esterior reggimento incorporata per così dire con le  
parti dell'ordine civile, io non parlerò per anco di scisma o di servitù, (chè  
il secolo è troppo colto da non averne in orrore anche i soli nomi), solo sarà  
rale a seguire, che ogni Chiesa, ogni Clero, ogni Nazione quanto più si conc-  
tanto abbia minor *espansività* fuori dei patrii confini — minor tendenza all'  
ne attiva e fraterna con le altre Chiese, cogli altri Cleri, col rimanente della  
glia umana — minor efficacia infine ad educare le nuove generazioni all'uni-  
tolica.

Lascerei ad altri il definire se la nazionalità fosse pur giunta in quest'ipo-



munne affetto di carità reciproca, e di religioso rispetto al Pastore Supremo, il Sacerdozio, dico, richiede a compiere l'opera sua un ministero meno ristretto tra i limiti del reggimento locale.

Io non vedo almeno finora, che alcuna delle condizioni più o meno felici della progrediente civiltà, debba indurre sì presto o sì necessariamente a volere, che la Chiesa rinunzii a quel suo antico sistema, così morale, così Cattolico, il quale indipendentemente dalle vie commerciali o diplomatiche, attuava ed incarnava, per così dire, il dogma dell'unità e della carità universale, mediante l'ufficio de' grandi corpi religiosi destinati a spandersi dal comun centro a tutta la terra.

Ad ogni modo le riflessioni proposte fin qui, mi paiono dar luogo ai seguenti dubbi.

1.° Se sussistendo in opera e a perpetua disposizione de' Pastori locali varii istituti religiosi non vincolati a luogo particolare, ma stretti al comun centro, questi istituti non sian per essere di giovamento all'unità Cattolica.

2.° Se l'opera di tali istituti possa in quell'ipotesi complicare in modo funesto agli interessi civili i vincoli esteriori di una nazione Cattolica con le altre, e col Sommo Pontefice — o non anzi questo vincolo tutto morale, succeda felicemente a quelli che si vanno sciogliendo.

3.° Poichè le nazioni sarebbero giunte all'estremo di civiltà e di sapienza nell'individuarsi insieme coi proprii Pastori, procedendo fin qui dietro la scorta de' principii Cattolici, e dirette come furono al fine dell'unità, potrebbe egli non importare alla conservazione del bene già acquistato, il mantenere sempre evidente davanti agli occhi quelli medesimi principii, e quel medesimo fine?

Io non procedo più oltre; vedo che la Chiesa, madre delle nazioni, è sollecita a mantenere fra gli altri mezzi di Cattolica unità, in mezzo alle nazioni eziandio incivilite, e accanto dei Cleri più fedeli ed attivi, insieme a varii altri ordini religiosi, una Compagnia d'uomini educati specialmente sopra questa idea d'un universo, e d'un centro universale, e destinati a spandersi sopra la terra, senza legame, che li stringa ad alcun luogo, per predicare alle menti come dogma, per infondere ne' cuori come affetto quest'unità di fratellanza Cristiana sotto un Padre, che tutti raccolga in Dio. — Vedo che i più illustri, e benemeriti Pastori amano questa Compagnia. — Vedo lei fra l'opera del suo Apostolato, in tale aspetto, che mi presenta l'immagine delle persecuzioni di Cristo — e tuttavia modesta e piena di carità. E mi prometto che niuna nazione incivilita giudicherà, che quella Compagnia sia per anco inutile a conservare col dogma Cattolico la precipua sicurtà d'ogni suo bene. — O certo niuna nazione Cattolica, niun filosofo tuo pari pronunzierà, che l'idea di patria, e di Gesuita si destruggono a vicenda, finchè la Chiesa tutrice d'ogni dovere, e d'ogni diritto, la Chiesa, che non ordinò il Gesuita fuorchè a servizio de' popoli, pronunzii, che oramai l'opera sua è diventata funesta.

### PRINCIPII DI EDUCAZIONE CIVILE.

Educazione civile non intendo io qui col volgo quella parte della pedagogia, che insegna le forme del trattar urbano.

Sotto questo titolo, che mi è sembrato rinchiudere tutta l'opera dell'istituzione de' popoli in ordine alla civiltà, voglio che discorriamo dell'intero sistema di dottrine e di mezzi, giusta il quale la Compagnia attende a coltivare le speranze della patria.

In questo senso io abbraccio sotto il nome di educazione non il solo ammaestramento de' giovani, che frequentino le nostre Scuole o sian raccolti ne' nostri Convitti, ma tutto insieme il Magistero, che siaci dato di esercitare con la voce, e con l'ope-

pubblico.

Il Sacerdozio è per proprio uffizio educatore; ma l'ampiezza di questo uffizio è misurata dalla maggior o minor distanza, in cui ogni nuova generazione d'uomini si trova dallo scopo dell'educazione medesima.

A quel modo, che si rallenta al giovane adulto il freno della domestica disciplina, e cessagli d'intorno la assiduità de' consigli paterni, per la fiducia che ragionevolmente si concepisce, non a favor dell'età, ma degli abiti virtuosi, e della prudenza dovuta acquistare per opera della prima istituzione, — così si modera l'azione mediata del sacerdozio nella cura morale e civile de' popoli, conforme ai progressi ottenuti dalle età anteriori, e possibili a godersi dalla generazione nascente, quale entrando al possesso de' lumi e de' vantaggi della presente civiltà, troverà volentieri nel pubblico stato delle cose un capitale di sapienza, ed una direzione per progredire più innanzi. — Sicchè ove nel primo costituirsi delle nazioni, il Sacerdozio era in uno Legislatore e Re e Maestro d'ogni sapere, una parte del sapere e dell'autorità di lui si divide poscia, o meglio si esercita liberamente dalle nazioni a misura del valore per esse conseguito in tutto ciò che è facoltà di natura, e pregio di civiltà; restando al ministro della Religione l'uffizio di sempre ravvivare l'elemento soprannaturale di verità, e di virtù, che solo comunica alla natura, e all'opera umana una direzione sicura, per cui giungano al fine della Creazione e della Redenzione.

Posto questo principio, non chiarito forse mai così bene, come in questa età, non punto straniero all'andamento della Chiesa cattolica in riguardo ai popoli che finora educati, sarebbe a doversi ricercare, se la Compagnia se ne sia discostata da quella che altra scuola cristiana, e se sia per impedirne al presente l'applicazione, con danno, che seguirebbe dal disaccordo delle generazioni da lei ammaestrate, rispetto al grado di civiltà, cui debbono crescere e prestare l'opera loro.

Istituita la Compagnia nella metà del secolo XVI, non vide la civiltà europea sul suo nascere, poi soppressa prima dalle grandi scosse che mutarono o accelerarono indirettamente il corso de' principii cattolici e filosofici, per condurre le cose allo stato presente, essa rinacque con quella, che si chiamò la Ristorazione; onde novanta e trenta, ove venti anni di nuovi servizii, ed ove anche meno. Ma se vogliamo nel giro de' tre secoli, che scorsero da S. Ignazio fino a noi, vedere ciò, che la Compagnia valesse in opera di civiltà, e come intendesse la misura del suo debito rispetto alle nazioni più o meno adulte, conviene stendere lo sguardo per tutto lo spazio della terra, e considerarla in atto di compiere il suo uffizio intorno a popoli sì diversi, nel loro complesso offrono allo sguardo la compiuta scala d'ogni grado di civiltà, cominciare dallo stato di vita selvaggia, e dalla semi-barbarie pagana o cristiana, a quello, ora paresse più perfetto.

Ora non può negarsi in prima, che rispetto a qualsiasi stato di civiltà inferiore a quelli, in che stavano le varie nazioni d'Europa in questi ultimi tre secoli, la Compagnia si è mostrata conscia della sua vocazione.

Là dove non eran arti, nè leggi, essa ne introdusse; e dove fu libera alcun tempo di non imporre un ordin di reggimento foggato all'Europea, essa mostrò qual vantaggio raccolli la Religione Cattolica valga a creare in una terra vergine. — Ciò vedi in gran parte dell'America, e specialmente nel Paraguay, la cui descrizione fatta da un missionario niente sospetta, sotto il titolo del *Cristianesimo felice* raccoglie in questo solo il concetto e l'elogio di quella Missione.

Dove poi la Compagnia trovò leggi e antica sapienza, nell'innestarvi che vi era il cristianesimo, essa rispettò così bene l'opera della natura, e i diritti delle tradizioni locali, da premuovervi tuttavia l'introduzione delle arti e delle scienze d'Europa. Ciò vedi nell'Asia e specialmente nella Cina.

bertà popolare, proponendosi sopra ogni cosa di impegnare i potenti a riordinare lo stato della Chiesa, e a darle i Pastori già venuti meno, ad ordinare l'anima e la vita propria a norma della legge cristiana, a porgere ai popoli mezzi di educazione, onde migliorassero di senno e di prosperità civile. — Ciò vedi nel primo nascere della Compagnia in tutte le corti d'Europa e specialmente in Germania

Dove sotto qualsiasi ordine esteriore di cose, era in estremo pericolo la fede, ivi straniera la Compagnia ad altra cura, non attendeva, che a rinnovare le une dopo le altre le squadre de' suoi Martiri, finchè fosse speranza di rassodarvi, o almeno di mantenervi un germe cattolico, da dover rifiorire più tardi a beneficio dello Stato. — Così vedi tra le persecuzioni più fiere in Inghilterra e nel Giappone. E poichè fra le industrie messe in opera a salute de' cattolici d'Inghilterra, sono da noverarsi i Collegii aperti in Roma ed altrove ai giovani di quella nazione, potresti vedere da più fatti come non ostante il contrasto religioso, que' giovani erano tuttavia restituiti alla patria con tutta viva e formata l'anima inglese, per associarsi ai comuni doveri di cittadini, quando la tirannia non ne li avesse esclusi — e per preparare allo Stato giorni più lieti.

Or vogliam vedere la Compagnia in opera fra lo splendor più bello della civiltà Europea? Fermiamo un momento lo sguardo sopra l'andamento politico dell'Europa cattolica, dal sorgere della Compagnia in qua. Tutti i Governi, senza punto aspettarsi impulso da altri, fuorchè dalle proprie circostanze, mirarono a stabilire il più forte governo, che per lor si potesse, un sistema di reggimento assoluto — pel quale ogni ramo di amministrazione, ogni elemento di vita sociale, si concentrasse tra le loro mani.

Il disegno loro parve grande, utile, santo. — Ma quanto la Compagnia vi concorresse si può argomentare dall'antagonismo manifestatosi or qui or là, e ognor più vivo per parte de' fautori di quel sistema (o fossero ministri dei Re, o della Chiesa) contro i Gesuiti specialmente, o contro tutto ciò che per esser più fermo al sistema cattolico di Roma, meritò d'esser guardato come nemico delle glorie nazionali e del potere dei Principi. Ciò, che si manifestò pel passato in Francia, e nella repubblica Veneta accadde parimente in Portogallo, in Ispagna, in Austria, in Italia. — E gli uomini che si diedero gli ultimi ad imitare la politica dell'assolutismo e del concentramento, giovandosi più rapidamente dell'esperienza de' primi, si vedono del pari congiungere più strettamente in un medesimo affetto, e lo studio di ottenere il loro scopo, e la diffidenza rispetto alla Santa Sede ed alla Compagnia. Con tutto ciò finchè l'odio non giunse all'estremo, e non si complicarono gli affari civili per la reazione de' principii democratici, o per la naturale conseguenza del sistema contrario — corse in ogni Stato un'epoca, in cui la Compagnia ebbe campo di attendere non meno all'educazione della gioventù, che ai pubblici ministeri.

Qual fu dunque allora la sua condotta? quali erano i doveri? e quali i mezzi per giovare?

Dovea la Compagnia avvalorare il principio dell'assolutismo? Dovea essa provocare con ardore il principio di libertà?

Mi pare che il suo uffizio le era convenientemente tracciato dalle circostanze e se non fosse stato in vigore l'elemento giansenistico, il quale trascinò del pari e il potere, ed i liberi pensatori alle estreme conseguenze delle sue dottrine, la Compagnia avrebbe potuto proseguire così lo svolgimento de' due principii, che coll'andare del tempo venissero pacificamente ad incontrarsi in tal armonia, che desse ad entrambi il debito luogo.

Mi pare cioè, che la Compagnia per quanto era libera ne' sacri Ministeri non cessava d'inchinare i Principi, ed i Grandi a sensi di carità, di moderazione, di giustizia.



ri a ricordarsi in faccia dell'altro, si aggiunse al pubblico ministero i istituti di private Congregazioni, e quelle della classe volgare distinte da quelle de' Nobili e Magistrati.

Intanto più o men libera ne' collegi, e tanto più efficace, quanto ne aveva in maggior numero, mentre essa formava l'età innocente alle virtù cristiane e domestiche per mezzo dell'insegnamento religioso, essa promoveva i possibili miglioramenti della condizione civile coll'educare non i soli nobili ai doveri di Corte, ma i giovanetti di tutte le classi del pari a quella scuola di ogni virtù cittadina, che è lo studio della classica antichità, quando va accoppiato col Vangelo, e col rispetto alle patrie usanze. Quella era una lezione indiretta, ma facile ad insinuarsi nelle menti de' giovani, e che imparavano i varii rispetti, per cui avessero a stimarsi uguali, o gli uni maggiori degli altri. — Quell'era una nobil palestra, dove fin da' primi loro anni s'addestravano il plebeo ed il patrizio e a misurare le loro forze, e a cedere la palma secondo i meriti del merito. — Quella era un sollevare la classe mezzana ed infima non solo a sentire degnamente di sè, e di chi lor sovrastasse per qualsiasi legittimo titolo, ma ancora a raccogliere nella vita que' maggiori proventi, che son frutto dell'ingegno e della coltura.

Nè però potea fallire, che ove gli ordini e i movimenti delle cose pubbliche fossero stati turbati per cagioni affatto indipendenti dalla Compagnia, l'educazione civile di ogni classe conducesse allo scopo, che ora a noi pare si fosse dovuto porre. — Perocchè nè avrebbe urtato di fronte contro i diritti acquistati, o contro la direzione presa dalla sfera superiore della società — nè però l'avrebbe lasciata cedere così sciolta da ogni riguardo ad estremi abusi, senza aver preparato nelle classi inferiori una misura di senno e di virtù, impossibile ad opprimersi. — Del che voglio pure dar vanto speciale alla sapienza de' Gesuiti. — Chè nè essi, nè altri que' tempi, era in grado di concepire l'opera dell'incivilimento con quella distinzione de' poteri, de' diritti, e de' fini, che è studio di questo secolo, provocato da lunghe e dolorose esperienze, nè giunto pure a compinta scienza. — Ma a me basta, che la Compagnia procedesse di fatto nel suo ministero col riguardo, ch'essa dovea dare al canto allo stato di quella civiltà, e dall'altro alla legge cattolica. — Or essa ritenne appunto questo mezzo, quando alleata fedele degli ordini stabiliti, senza darsi a dottrine politiche, si limitava ad assicurare un felice avvenire coll'accrescere in ogni ceto la doppia virtù della fede, e della ragion naturale. — Chè ove questi lumi si fossero applicati da ognuno ai proprii doveri, e agli interessi comuni, e se si confidava che il senno nazionale sarebbe proceduto senza sconcerti ad ogni desiderio di miglioramento.

Che se esaminiamo la condotta della Compagnia ne' paesi liberi, o separati dalla Chiesa cattolica, egli è pur un fatto, ch'essa non ha mai dato occasione di confondere l'ordin pubblico del governo con la causa religiosa. Il fatto era così evidente che quando Clemente XIV disperdeva i Gesuiti ad istigazione di chi li diceva perturbatori degli Stati, non solo varii Stati, che prima li possedevano si adoperavano per sospendere l'effetto del Breve, od impedirlo, come la repubblica di Genova, la Russia, e la Prussia, ma i Sovrani di questi due Stati accolsero in buon numero gli espulsi da altri paesi, e Caterina singolarmente volle che nel suo Impero la Compagnia si perpetuasse nel primiero suo essere. — Come i Gesuiti d'Inghilterra e i molti che di Francia eransi colà rifuggiti, non dessero ombra per le loro massime politiche, eppur abbiano giovato ad un progresso di infinito vantaggio nel sistema della libertà civile, lo vediamo dall'esser concorsi con la loro influenza alla propagazione del Cattolicismo, e a far cadere le antiche prevenzioni di cui la vera Chiesa e

pari a quella di Università, ed O' Connell li rispetta e li commenda, e loro affida i suoi figli, ciò accade appunto perchè consci della parte che loro spetta nell'educazione civile delle nazioni colte e libere, si stanno ne' limiti del loro uffizio fuori delle gare e delle fazioni politiche. — O se finalmente la Compagnia fiorisce sì libera, ed onorata negli Stati Uniti d' America, dov' è in perfetta armonia con la Chiesa romana, e coi Governi locali, con la coscienza de' Cattolici e con le leggi politiche, dove possiede cospicui Collegii col diritto di conferire i gradi accademici, nè minore la fiducia de' governanti che de' privati cittadini, il nostro paese non ignora, che a darle quello spirito e quell' avviamento s' adoperò principalmente quel nostro P. Grassi, che ognuno conobbe a Torino, fedele al suo Re, e degno di presiedere all' educazione della nobile gioventù di Piemonte (1).

Nè questa armonia, in che i Gesuiti si mettono sì agevolmente coi principii costitutivi di qualunque Stato, è puoto apatia o servilità. Lo sanno bene que' Governi quali prendono per avventura a lasciarsi sviare da uomini ipocriti. Chè certo no, l'ipocrisia non sa sperare che il Gesuita la secondi. — S' invochi il nome di libertà s' invochi quello di autorità reale, di buon ordine, o di ben pubblico, s' invochi anche Roma od il Vangelo, chiunque invoca il dovere, il diritto, o le cose più sante con cuor ipocrita, quegli è il primo a mettersi in guardia rispetto ai Gesuiti; il fatto è perpetuo. E quale ne è la cagione? Il sapersi troppo bene, che il Gesuita anch' egli è zelatore del diritto e del dovere, ma ne abbraccia e ne sostiene la causa con una franchezza e fedeltà, da non potersi accennare coll' abuso delle dottrine, ossia che si vogliano esagerare in favore del dispotismo, o delle passioni popolari. — Né questa fedeltà de' Gesuiti è ciecamente tenace degli usi presenti, non è timore di un progresso ch' essa giudichi funesto ai suoi interessi.

Chi più del Gesuita suol meditare la differenza che passa dal presente all'eterno. Chi più del Gesuita sospira e promuove il progresso di ogni lume di verità, e di sapienza, mentre non v' è condizione d' uomini più studiosamente intenta alle scuole, e al sacro Ministero? Sì il maestro, e 'l missionario predicano entrambi alle generazioni che si succedono: — « Ecco l' altissimo scopo della vita sociale; non onori d' ambirsi, non tesori da farsi comuni, non splendore o mollezza di vita. — Ma s' anzi pubblica emulazione di virtù, le quali uscite dal tempio e dalle pareti domestiche, introducano nel foro, nel commercio, nelle arti, nelle leggi, e nelle reciproche relazioni di ogni classe, non che la giustizia, ma ogni più bel frutto di una ragione colta ed operosa. Ecco lo scopo: a quello tenete l'occhio e progredite. — A progredire vi sprona il Vangelo, fintanto che vi rimprovera virtù avere e pigrezza. E può esso mai conciliarsi con una fede languida, con una carità inefficace, con un' attività inutile, ispirata dall' interesse, o da leggerezza di mente? — A progredire

(1) Sarebbero degni di esser qui riferiti gli estratti di due fogli americani (*The Advertiser* 2 luglio 1843, *Gazette des Opelousas* 20 luglio 1844) dove si descrivono le feste patriottiche del giorno anniversario dell' indipendenza celebrate nel collegio de' Gesuiti, e dal polo della Luisiana. Il discorso che un Padre della Compagnia, fece in una di queste circostanze fu lodato a cielo. Ma queste notizie sconcerterebbero alcune menti, e darebbero un concetto inesatto intorno allo spirito della Compagnia, se non riferissi del pari gli esercizi accademici de' nostri collegi d' Europa, dove col medesimo spirito di carità cattolica la Compagnia s' industria ad affezionare la gioventù alla storia patria, e le insegna a venerare i maggiori, che vi acquistaron nome di cittadini valenti, ad apprezzarne i monumenti, a celebrarne le geste, a perpetuarne con degne opere la gloria. — Come il vidi quest' anno a Cagliari ed a Genova, così a Torino, così il vediamo dai prospetti stampati d' altre città d' Italia, così è studio costante de' nostri maestri presso qualsiasi nazione, non ad ozioso trattenimento, ma con la mira di consolidare nella generazione crescente quei sensi che guarentiscono fedeltà, ordine, obbedienza alle leggi, e sono stimolo alle imprese ed ai sacrifici voluti pel comun bene dello Stato.

« che non apprezzate, vorrete lasciarli sepolti. — I rogne di scuola in scuola, e tu in virtù, a misura che progredirete in età e assumerete doveri maggiori; — a progredire più rapidamente, non vogliate sbandarvi e correre a precipizio; — ogni nuova via vi si apra davanti. — All' avvenire progredirete con tutto il raccolto dal passato, e posto in capitale al presente. — Le buone istituzioni mancano, i lumi dell' antichità sono i più fecondi di utili veri, metteteli studiosamente in opera il vero conosciuto, praticate le leggi vigenti, ognuno tolga dalla propria condotta gli abusi, di cui può esser colpevole. — Allora avrete fatto un passo a stato migliore, senza mutare gli ordini presenti. — Ma allora di più ordini presenti fossero da riformarsi, avrete sapienza e virtù da giudicarne, e c'è da intraprendere l' opera con sincero accordo delle menti, e comun vantaggio del paese, e d' ogni cittadino. »

Questa è sola infatti la dottrina, che può rendere il Gesuita sospetto, o almeno a certi politici, quasi sia troppo stazionario o retrogrado. — Ma quando si sian giunti a metter in opera un qualsiasi loro disegno vorranno predicare, non si rispetti ciò che avranno stabilito con le lor mani, e forse a loro profitto? La natura non ha lasciato sopravvivere alle giovani generazioni, la generazione dei padri, affine di rassodare a pro dell' avvenire, il presente ed il passato? O la dottrina cattolica può volere che il ministro del Vangelo si stringa ad un sistema locale esclusivo?

Questo è, che la Compagnia professa il solo universale, epperò tutte rinchiudendo le idee più feconde di ordine, tutto il principio della carità Cattolica, tutto il concetto della storia, e dell' ultimo fine — vale solo a ispirare quell' affetto sincero ed efficace, che il Gesuita dimostra costantemente a qualsiasi legittimo ordine che egli trovi stabilito. Quando altri ci inducesse ad un sistema meno largo, meno applicabile ad ogni luogo e ad ogni tempo, noi potremmo, sì veramente partecipare alle passioni politiche, ma non potremmo prometterci d' esser più costanti in tutte le tue mire; che dove è dato adito al vento delle opinioni, ed agli interessi del potere, o d' una fazione, ivi il ministero stesso della Religione può farsi strumento di abusi. — Meglio vi giovi sarei per dire a certuni, meglio vi giovi condurre le discussioni con tal riguardo, che succedano al presente come spontaneo suo frutto, fate che niun diritto riconosciuto e vigente venga offeso, fate che ogni diritto sia ridotto ad equilibrarsi con quello d' altri, accrescendo ad ognuno individuo virtù per sostenere degnamente il suo. — Allora vi applaudirà il Gesuita, e la sua voce discorderà da quella della vostra coscienza. Anzi allora solo vedrete ogni Sacerdote cattolico fatto naturale fautore de' vostri successi, perchè il vostro ministero ed i suoi si troveran condotti da un' idea comune, così feconda di felicità, come essenza dell' ordine morale. Voi procederete con franca fiducia ad una riforma tanto più utile e durevole quanto sarà in maggior armonia con l' opera universale della provvidenza della Chiesa. — Nel servire all' una e all' altra parteciperete alla loro potenza poichè non è bene, se non quanto discende da loro, e per loro si riordina a Dio, più che farete in-secondare l' opera loro, sarà il vostro più vero titolo alla gratitudine de' popoli.

Ma tu, che riconosci per avventura in queste parole un concetto, che è pur troppo anzichè lasciare, che noi ci facciam un merito di professarlo per nostro del passato, quanto è cattolico — saresti per domandarci conto del come vi si conformi la condotta.

Nei tempi addietro non fu il *gesuitismo* fautore della *demagogia più sfrontata* sino a giustificare e commendare il regicidio? Ebbero mai paura delle rivoluzioni? E ora le sue speranze consistono in altro fuorchè nella balia di certi prin-

Quanto alla dottrina del regicidio, o dirò meglio del tirannicidio, la quale correva in ogni Università prima che i Gesuiti ne facessero parola ne' loro trattati di morale, essa è proscritta dalle scuole della Compagnia da 235 anni, con tali clausule pene, che non ci è pur libero di discuterla privatamente (*Ord. Gen. P. Cl. Aquaviva*, 6 iul. 1610).

Il fallo poi di que' Gesuiti, che favorirono la così detta *Legn*, siami concesso d'averlo per ben giudicato da Arrigo IV quando rispose alla pubblica arringa di Achille de Harlay :

*De les appeller ( les Jésuites ) compagnie de factieux, parce qu' ils ont été de la Ligue, c' a été l' injure du temps. Ils croient de bien faire, et y ont été trompés comme tant d' autres, mais je veux croire que c' a été avec moins de malice que les autres. ( V. Schoell, Cours d' Histoire des États Européens T. XVII, p. 205 ).*

— Nè punto meno, che il Re, la Chiesa proseguì ad avere intiera fidocia ne' Gesuiti d' allora, associandoli a tutti gli interessi della fede e della pace universale. — Nè pur l' ostinato concerto di tante sette eretiche e di tante fazioni politiche in esagerare la complicità della Compagnia con la *Santa-Unione*, potè far dimenticare la fermezza del Generale Aquaviva, e del P. Edmondo Auger nel disapprovarla, l' obbedienza di Enrico Sammier, e di Claudio Matthieu nel ritirarsene, e il merito del Possevino, e del Toledo nel ripararne i mali.

Quanto ad altre imputazioni, che tu mostri di solo accennare, come di colpi orribili e già troppo note, confessa pure che nel farne parola ti compiacesti più del pregio di buon rettorico, che non di tal critico, quale ti sai dovere di essere nelle cose degli Indiani o dei Cinesi.

Io nego intanto i fatti, cui tu abbi inteso di rimettere in memoria, perchè quali sogliono ricantarsi da altri — e sono già stati discussi, e dimostrata la nostra innocenza.

Ma ove sembri alludere alla condotta politica della Compagnia dal suo risorgimento in qua, tu avresti dovuto per amore di verità e di giustizia mostrarla troppo più in armonia con la condotta della Chiesa e del mondo, che non hai voluto fare.

Qual fu l' opera della Ristorazione, e le sue circostanze? — Certo conformi all' intese, e l' accettò il Clero d' ogni Nazione, così fece la Compagnia ; l' ebbe, cioè come risorgimento di antichi diritti temperati ne' diversi paesi da concessioni più o meno liberali in favore di diritti nati fra le vicende degli anni precedenti. Era giusta l' idea ? Certo non potea parere a tutti — e non sarebbe stata giusta, se l' ammettere in qualsiasi proporzione i diritti novelli non fosse stato altro, che una tolleranza ipocrita e provvisoria con la mira di violarli, di rovinarli per riedificare tutto di pianta l' ordine antico. Ma di questa tendenza ipocrita chi fu accusato ? La Compagnia — lo concedo, — ma perchè ? Non già per sua colpa, ma perchè chi era per qualsiasi motivo appassionato all' ordin nuovo, e ne avrebbe voluto un più rapido e completo trionfo, mal sapea tollerare, che risorgessero e si consolidassero i diritti, che chiudevano il risarcimento. E la Compagnia era anch' essa in causa per rivivere dopo soppressa, — e la Compagnia rappresentava tutto un antico stato di cose voluto distruggere — e la Compagnia non aveva meriti, che la commendassero presso il secolo nuovo. Perciò, senza pur ch' io metta in questione se i suoi avversarii fossero tutti uomini moderati e giusti, perciò l' opera di questo Istituto redivivo, potè, senz' altro esame, senza prima aspettarne saggio dall' esperienza, per sola preoccupazione di antipatia apparire sospetta, molesta, inopportuna, e da doversi soffocare sui suoi principii. — Ma vedi, che la Compagnia non fu sola odiata ed accusata da cotesti politici e d'

ni, che potea servire predilezione in lavor del potere, e tutta in generale di  
classe di uomini sinceramente affezionati alla Religione e si qualificò di *Cattolici*  
spesso ancora tutto del pari il Sacerdozio.

Qual fu però in fatto la condotta della Compagnia? essa congiunse le idee  
Religione con quelle di devozione al Principe, e se in ciò fu colpa, quella fu per  
colpa di tutti i Pastori, di tutti i Principi, di tutto il popol cattolico, direi quasi  
l'impulso universale, e dell'istinto perpetuo di tutta la Chiesa.

— Se la Compagnia riordinò le sue Congregazioni e i suoi convitti, essa  
non offendeva punto le leggi, nè pare, che le famiglie cristiane d'ogni diversa  
nazione politica fossero sì poche a secondarla, nè andava però divisa dai Pastori  
quali anzi le affidavano in questa e in altre cure una parte del loro proprio mi-  
ro. — Se poi fu accusata di dominare gli alti de' Principi, di fare gli Stati se-  
del Papa, di creare i Vescovi, ed i regii ministri a suo talento, di ordire immen-  
trame dall'una all'altra estremità dell'Europa, di preparare una generazione  
natici, e già raccogliere armi d'ogni genere da metterle in mano a sterminio  
amici di libertà, fu pur detto ancora peggio, e perfino esser i Gesuiti demonii in-  
ne, e ciò vedersi, se non dalle corna, almeno dai piedi mostruosi che nasconde-  
con la sottana. — Ma, grazie a Dio, tutte cose sì assurde, che neppur la smania  
riaccesa di disperderci dal mondo, non osò più far mostra di ricordarsene. A  
son ridotte tutte le accuse mosse un giorno contro la Compagnia per la con-  
ch'essa ha tenuta sotto la così detta Ristorazione? A citar una pagina d'un Com-  
dio di Storia, dove il P. Loriguet avrebbe lasciato cader dalla penna parole as-  
o insultanti. — E nemmen quelle parole si trovano nelle edizioni, che sono in  
ne' nostri collegii, o in altra, che si possa citare.

Ove ti piaccia di congiunger sempre la Compagnia, con quello che poi ch'  
gesuitismo, e comprende tutto insieme e gli amici de' Gesuiti, e i devoti della Me-  
chia, e gli spiriti deboli, e gli uomini interessati, e i lodatori de' tempi antichi,  
ipocriti, ed i fanatici, che invocano il nome di lei, per farsene più belli, o più  
mendi, vedi tu, se questo tuo concetto o sia abbastanza preciso per esser ba-  
un'accusa così grave e formale, come quella che ci intenti, o sia nè anche per  
luce nella storia.

La storia vorrebbe discernere gli elementi eterogenei che la ristorazione vo-  
ad abbracciare nel suo seno. Qual era lo spirito delle corti? — Formatosi forse  
scuola de' Gesuiti? — Quale lo spirito della risorgente aristocrazia? — Quale q-  
del Clero? Quali le speranze, i voli del popolo? Forse che la Compagnia prima  
ra di esistere avea creato l'entusiasmo, che allora reagiva contro un ordine vio-  
di cose? In quali circostanze entrò la Compagnia ne' diversi Stati d'Europa? S-  
quale influenza si trovò essa medesima? Quali erano i diritti vigenti e sanciti  
l'ordin pubblico? Quali le apparenze, le pretese delle fazioni, che si dicevan  
presse? — E in quelle circostanze quali erano i doveri de' Gesuiti, e di tutto il C-  
cattolico? E qual è il Gesuita, che abbia tradito que' doveri, o sia colpevole d'a-  
esagerati a danno de' diritti nascenti?

Ecco ciò che la storia può ricercare. E ciò richiede non una sintesi preci-  
sa, ma un'analisi distinta delle cagioni e degli effetti. — Ma tanto più lo ricer-  
giustizia quando si tratta di dover venire ad una sentenza di sterminio e di obbro-  
a danno d'un sodalizio intiero, il quale professa un istituto lontano da ogni inter-  
politico, e riprova schiettamente le imprudenze, che si possano opporre ai suc-  
dividui, nè a respingere le calunnie o le invettive possiede altr'arme fuorchè s-  
oneste.

Abbi riguardo, ten prego, al debito, che la Compagnia professa, di tacere a



ch' essa sia stata generosa a servir sempre in che potè, chi l' aveva percossa? e fedele, sul nascere d' un nuovo potere, ad accettarlo ne' termini, in che lo accettò la S. Sede? E promotrice di tutto quel bene, che la rendè cara ai più eminenti Pastori, e rispettabile nell' opinione di tanti illustri zelatori delle leggi?

Se le innovazioni, che il tempo rende necessario non fossero sì spesso oggetto di opposte passioni, se la giustizia, e la causa dell' umanità non fossero sì spesso tolte a promuoversi da uomini impazienti di vincere e con mezzi violenti o infami, non sarebbe diritto vigente, non sarebbe uso sì antico, non sarebbe religione sì santa, che opponesse contrasto. — Ma se il contrasto è provocato dagli affetti esagerati de' novatori, se i modi, le arti che mettono in opera ispirano il sospetto, lo sdegno, la resistenza — il ritardo cagionato al ben comune è così imputabile a' loro, come vorrebbero che fosse imputato alla fazione tenace del presente, ove questa fosse la prima a mostrarsi ingiusta verso i nascenti diritti, artificiosa, avara, violenta.

Ora dunque interroga i fatti e vedrai perchè la Compagnia si trovava straniera a certe fazioni, e per lo contrario collocata nel campo di certe altre. — Essa era straniera a certi, che credevansi promotori d' un miglior essere, perchè nè il concetto de' loro sistemi, nè i mezzi del loro operare, poteva sempre ispirare fiducia ad uomini religiosi, i quali prendono il Vangelo, e la Chiesa per norma de' loro giudizi. — E tuttavia si trovava come naturalmente collocata tra i confini della fazione opposta, perchè qualunque fossero altresì i debiti, o i torti di questa, essa avea tutta l' apparenza di stare per que' diritti, che la Compagnia non dovea leggermente abbandonare.

Di qui venne però che il nome di gesuitismo fu preso a notare quella fazione politica, la quale sta pei diritti del passato o del presente — e perchè questa è accusata di combattere per proprio interesse, e d' invocare ipocritamente la religione, a tutela d' un ingiusto egoismo, perciò il vizio attribuito alla fazione già voluta chiamar gesuitica, supponsi tanto più radicato nella Compagnia medesima.

Di qui può ancora accadere, che la fazione progreditrice, sia senza volerlo cagione della simpatia e della fermezza, con che si stringono maggiormente a comune difesa e gli uomini tenaci del passato, e i ministri della religione. — Che se questa alleanza è infausta veramente, in quanto dà occasione di confondere la religione cogli interessi umani, e allontana disgraziatamente dalla madre una parte de' figli sdegnati, e prolunga gli errori intorno ai pretesi o ai veri diritti, e avvalora per avventura una resistenza non sempre giusta o sincera alle proposte di qualche riforma: non sarà pur vero altresì, che ad esagerare questi effetti, e a chiamare il potere ipocrita, o il sacerdozio fautore del potere, è tanto interessata la parte opposta, da non doversi prestar troppa fede alle sue declamazioni?

Io vedo bene, che questa va modificando il suo linguaggio, e che professando venerazione e fiducia alla Religione cattolica, ti consente di esaltare il Papa, di onorare il Clero, di commentare il Monachismo, sicchè tutte le accuse di fanatismo, o d' interessata devozione a certi Principi, o di nascoste trame contro la patria paiano colpire i soli Gesuiti.

Vedo bene, che per questa via si schiva il pericolo di offendere o di intimorire di soverchio i Pastori od i Principi, e s' impegnano gli uomini onorati a separarsi da una società, cui non potrebbero difendere senza partecipare all' infamia del suo nome. — E convinto che ogni fazione consta per la maggior sua parte non che d' illustri, ma ancora di generosi, non voglio pure che in bocca dei più questo cattolicismo antigesuitico e tutto civile, sia sospettato di quell' intenzione e di quell' artificio, che altri vi vuol vedere.

Ma tu che insieme a generosa franchezza professi una politica illuminata dalla

ogni fonte migliore — vedi se anche adesso la Compagnia non si trova con-  
co' Pastori, e da loro protetta. — Vedi se non è ora più che mai lontana dal po-  
o dal voler intromettersi nelle cose politiche. — Vedi se non si limita a solo p-  
care il rispetto ai diritti manifesti, la giustizia e la carità agli uomini d' ogni fazi-  
i doveri presenti come scala e sicurtà ad ogni miglior avvenire.

Se scorgi, ch' essa faccia altrimenti, e se in lei riconosci altri debiti più ur-  
ti fra le odierne circostanze, allora ripeti, incalza le tue denunzie (1). — Ma se  
sta è la moderazione, che le conviene rispetto alle questioni, che dividono gli sp-  
se questa mantiene di fatto, e intanto s' adopera con indefesso zelo così ne' sacri-  
nisteri in cui le è dato di associarsi ai Pastori, come nel promuovere i buoni st-  
che sono base d' ogni progresso e della gloria civile, tu sai che ti abbi da fare  
mi devi lasciar libero di prevenirti, mentre voglio dichiarare, che i principii di  
le educazione messi in opera dalla Compagnia sono così in armonia col sistema c-  
lico, come i soli da imporsi al nostro ministero.

## SCUOLE E CONVITTI.

A terminare però la questione proposta nel precedente paragrafo giova di-  
dere ad una particolarità donde meglio che non da altre discussioni dee risultare  
principii di civile educazione dalla Compagnia professati siano buoni, ed essa si  
dele nell' applicarli.

Uno dei Ministeri specialmente destinati da Pio VII, non che dal primitivo  
tuto alla Compagnia di Gesù è l' educazione de' giovani — la quale dovendo p-  
rare l' avvenire della patria, è altresì quell' opera, di cui i promotori d' ogni mi-  
progresso son più solleciti di chiederci conto.

Qui dunque è a vedersi se la Compagnia meriti tuttora la fiducia, di cui l' -  
raronò al suo rinascere la Sede romana, e parecchi Stati cattolici.

E prima sono da stabilirsi le condizioni, intorno alle quali essa debba sode-  
re; perchè un' espressione qualunque di favore, o di disfavore non ha peso di  
giudizio se non in quanto sia ispirata alla parte più sana del pubblico, dal nostro  
tendere o no alle obbligazioni contratte verso di lui.

Tu vedi infatti che altri sono i sistemi di educazione che la Compagnia a-  
preso a seguire in Francia, e mantiene tuttora nei collegii di Svizzera, di Savoia

(1) Quando tu denunzii *l' amicizia e l' alleanza contratta tra l' Austria e la Compagnia*  
( Proleg. p. 146 ) tu non rifletti :

1.° Che siffatte alleanze sono un ravvicinare i popoli al comun Padre e Pastore —  
tali sono la Dio mercè ben altri esempi così in America, come in Europa, qualunque  
reggimento degli Stati.

2.° Che ove l' Austria e la Compagnia avessero avuto a dar al mondo un pegno de-  
larsi reggere con uno spirito meno esclusivo ed egoistico di quello che loro supponi, anzi  
letico, siccome il vorresti, e veramente cattolico, non avrebbero potuto darne pegno più  
ficativo.

3.° Che quest' alleanza fu invocata, e con generosi sacrificii ottenuta da buona pa-  
quegli Italiani, i quali concentrando nella sola idea cattolica i principii di tutti i doveri,  
reno che un vincolo più stretto con Roma li avvalorava così alla virtù di sudditi, come a  
di cittadini.

4.° Che avendo tu cercato dapprima ( Proleg. p. 104 ) se la Compagnia sia giunta a dis-  
invecchiate preoccupazioni, conciliando venerazione ed affetto alla santa Sede, assolidand-  
ratti legittimi de' Principi, con soddisfazione de' desiderii ragionevoli e discreti delle nazioni.  
Questo fatto te ne poneva sotto gli occhi una risposta delle più eloquenti.

E quando per brevità adopero queste forme di dire confido di essere inteso da chi in-  
te, se al fatto, che tu accenni, ci guardi con occhio imparziale.

rimproverare di non aver educato i suoi figli all' uso di Friburgo. io direi, che per quanto egli abbia ragione di preferire il sistema di quel convitto ad un altro ; egli non può incolparci di avere dapprima seguito in Italia, e in ogni paese il voto della maggioranza di coloro, che richiedevano l' opera nostra a pro della gioventù, riservandoci di procedere via via col tempo a quelle modificazioni, che da nuovi bisogni e dall' esperienza de' primi saggi fossero richieste.

Ma supponi ancora, che col modificarsi le idee del pubblico non più un censore, ma parecchi padri di famiglia, e amici della Compagnia già vadano sollecitando una riforma più o men radicale nel sistema d' un collegio o d' un convitto, io crederai di poterla invocare con voti non meno impazienti, nè però potrei essere sollecitato ad eseguirla, od incolpato di inabile nè di inesperto, finchè la voluta riforma incontra ostacoli impossibili a togliersi dal solo buon volere della Compagnia, in un oggetto dove non è mai, che possa aver essa sola la mano.

Che se le opinioni son sì divise da non sapersi quale esprima il voto più comune e più ragionevole, se al voto più comune, per avventura, fra i padri di famiglia di un ceto particolare, si oppone o uno statuto de' governanti, o un giudizio de' dotti, o anche solo un regolamento d' universale autorità nella Compagnia, sarà questa in colpa, ove mentre aspetta di meglio discernere, in che abbia da modificare nell' avvenire i suoi usi, li va osservando coi debiti riguardi alle circostanze presenti ?

Ora questi supposti ti presentano appunto lo stato reale in cui si trova la Compagnia rispetto a coloro, che la censurano, che la sollecitano, che vorrebbero tutto vederla più fatta a modo loro, senza considerare, che cosa essa debba ad altri, e quanto possa coi mezzi, che le son dati.

Le censure, i consigli, i voti di cui è oggetto l' educazione civile, che suol darci si ne' nostri collegii, si riducono a questi pochi capi principali, che tu stesso raccogli nella tua *Avvertenza*.

- 1.° La disciplina domestica.
- 2.° L' insegnamento religioso.
- 3.° Gli studi.

E per dire tosto di questi, tu sai, che, eccettuati i collegii d' Inghilterra, e forse quelli degli stati Uniti, gli altri d' Italia, di Germania e ancor di Svizzera sono tutti più o meno impegnati a seguire certi statuti locali, necessarii alla più possibile uniformità tra le varie scuole de' singoli Stati.

In generale gli studi italiani sono retti con un sistema, che mira alla seria coltura delle lettere classiche, onde si fa scala alla filosofia, e alle scienze ; ed è lo stesso che la Compagnia ereditò da' maggiori.

Fedele a condurre i suoi scolari per la via segnata alla notizia ed all' imitazione de' classici latini ed italiani, essa è pur conscia tuttavia fin dal suo rinascimento de' quanto l' odierna civiltà richieda più oltre. Per soddisfare al comune voto della coltura l' Europa essa modificò da un canto l' antico *Ratio Studiorum*, dandovi più ampio luogo a parecchi studi accessorii voluti oggidì parte a decoro, e parte a necessario complemento della civile educazione quali sono Storia, Geografia, elementi di Matematica. — Dall' altro essa mantiene e promuove al possibile lo studio della lingua greca nel quale mal consentirebbe, che l' Italia si tenesse inferiore alla Francia, alla Germania, o a qualsiasi altra nazione.

Ma ecco ciò che accade in Italia.

Le mire de' padri di famiglia non vanno in tutto d' accordo con quella de' dotti e de' promotori delle umane lettere.

Altre volte le scuole pubbliche erano aperte per queste sole. — A pro di quest



Allora chi entrava nelle scuole intendeva o di proseguirne il corso per conseguire la vita, o di prenderne solo quegli elementi di letteratura, che gli giovassero al miglioramento delle notizie, che l'educazione domestica, ed il commercio civile bastava procacciargli.

In queste prime epoche le scuole non erano ingombrate di tanti inetti, eccettuati que' soli che fossero voluti spingere *invita Minerva* ai gradi accademici, che conteneva di rientrare nell'officina paterna, o di consacrarsi alla sola scienza di mestiere, e non perdeva troppi anni intorno alle gramatiche.

Ma dacchè nell'intento di diffondere maggior coltura fra le classi mezzane furono imposti determinati corsi di lettere per condizione necessaria ad entrare in varie carriere civili, e perfino in certi fondachi, e in certi mestieri, fu inevitabile all'ingombro d'una turba di giovani privi di vera vocazione per gli studi. Ad onta dell'utile, che alle scuole poteva tornare sotto altri rispetti, vennero quindi a soggiacere a non pochi danni; uno de' quali dovette essere il rallentarsi de' progressi. Perchè riuscendo impossibile il promuovere ogni anno di classe in classe tutta la turba di tanti scolari, che avevano occupato i banchi senza alcun ardore per imparare, nè potendo pur vietare con troppa severità che procedessero innanzi que' tanti che premea giustamente di poter in brevi anni guadagnarsi il pane, accadde che l'istruzione dovette discendere alla misura de' mediocri, misura tanto più bassa, quanto sia da supporre maggior il numero di coloro, che non istudiano per amore del sapere, ma per compiere alla meglio una condizione voluta a conseguire un fine volgare.

Ma un altro danno è quello che ci travaglia nel secol presente, e lo chiameremo relativamente allo scopo speciale delle scuole letterarie, chè del resto a guai non in sè può anzi chiamarsi un progresso.

Quest'è, che il comun de' cittadini volendo, che i loro figliuoli coltivino l'ingegno al gusto della buona letteratura, e all'acquisto delle scienze, vorrebbero tutto che le scuole non fossero così esclusivamente dirette a questo fine, che i giovani non vi si fornissero eziandio di quel corredo di notizie, le quali giovino ad abbellire la vita, o a fare strada in qualunque onorata carriera.

Questi voti così onesti, e tanto più legittimi in favore d'una classe modesta, la quale non ambisce tanto gli onori accademici, quanto il decoro d'una vita laboriosa, e d'una scienza utile, furon in parte voluti appagare dal Venerabile Ab. La Salle, fondatore de' Fratelli delle Scuole Cristiane, e da altri somiglianti istituti; ma che escludono gli studi della classica antichità, e lasciano luogo a metter in dubbio se per avventura non privino le lettere di tali cultori, che per valor d'ingegno, e per nobiltà di tempra d'affetti, si sarebbero in queste utilmente segnalati.

Il pericolo di chiudere il libero svolgimento alle facoltà, ed alla naturale inclinazione de' giovani sarebbe anche maggiore, ove le scuole così dette di latinità, si limitassero anch'esse a voler escludere qualunque scolaro non fosse per darsi unicamente alle lettere ed alle scienze.

Che la prima età non può determinarsi da sè, nè essere sì assolutamente determinata da altri ad una vocazione speciale se non è per alcun tempo fatta esercitare un arringo preliminare, e più o meno a svolgere le facoltà, e le inclinazioni, che si dirigono come da sè all'oggetto, che loro si trovi meglio proporzionato, e che risponda a' veri interessi del giovane, della famiglia e della patria.

Di qui avviene, cred'io, che mentre si lasciano moltiplicare e si favoriscono le scuole speciali come le scuole militari, quelle di commercio, quelle di marina, ed altre simili di privato corso, i padri di famiglia si dividono per la maggior parte in soli due sistemi meno esclusivi, che sono quelle delle scuole latine, e quello che

Nè potendo accadere, che il senno di chi presiede a questa parte sì rilevante della civile educazione, discordi dal comun senso de' cittadini, mi par di prevedere, che le scuole latine saranno lasciate ancora qualche tempo a modo di comune palestra ed indifferente ai giovani di diversa vocazione, e costrette però a sacrificare una parte del classico splendore, che potrebbero conseguire altrimenti, per dar luogo conveniente a studi di diverso genere, i quali concorrano a maggiore sviluppo delle menti giovanili, ed aprano l'adito così al commercio ed alle arti, come al foro ed al santuario d'ogni scienza.

Bensì, come suole accadere, questa via di mezzo scontenta i due estremi; gli zelatori delle buone lettere vorrebbero, che gli studi accessorii fossero più subordinati agli studi classici, i padri di famiglia più solleciti di ciò, che giova tra l'ordinario commercio civile, esclamano che i loro figli son trattenuti inutilmente intorno ad una letteratura, che dicon morta, e li vorrebbero più presto abili a conteggiare, e a trattare d'ogni negozio.

Ai primi applaude con tutta l'anima la Compagnia, e si sinceramente che quando il signor Thiers nel perorare una causa, nella quale ci è permesso di non aderire al suo avviso, stabilì sì bene la necessità di una seria cura nell'affezionare i giovani più che ad altro allo studio indefesso della classica antichità, io ne udii dai nostri religiosi ripetere elogi, non meno che dell'università parigina, la quale come si vede eziandio dai prospetti degli esami e de' concorsi annui, mantiene degnamente in questa parte gli antichi suoi titoli alla gratitudine della repubblica letteraria.

Intanto però, che i troppi altri poco curanti di lettere antiche proseguono a indirizzare i loro figli là dove quelle s'insegnano, e pretendono che vi imparino piuttosto altre utili discipline, convien pure, che siano contentati, col minor danno possibile di quegli studi, che hanno da avere il primato.

Perchè non giovano ragioni o teorie le quali non si adattino alle circostanze, anzichè rovesciare il presente per accelerare un più bell'avvenire la Compagnia crede, che sia più savio il tollerare, come fanno eziandio i Magistrati, qualche censura coll'adempire, secondo le sue forze ai doveri, che le furono creati dai tempi presenti confidando, che l'esperienza sia per ispirare più tardi un miglior sistema.

Certo il mezzo più acconcio di purgare le scuole superiori da chi non ha vocazione per le lettere, senza però impedire che diano prove di sè i fanciulli d'ogni condizione, sta nell'aprire l'adito delle scuole di Gramatica latina a chiunque vi voglia entrare, restringendo poscia via via il passaggio dall'una all'altra, e più dalla Gramatica in su, sicchè non vengano a sperare promozione fuorchè gli eletti, i quali diano sufficienti speranze di proseguire la carriera letteraria. —

Ma nè occorre, che altri ce lo consigli, mentre siamo i primi a volerlo — non tuttavia è da sperare che questo solo mezzo tolga ogni occasione di biasimo o di pargnistei. Di questi sono pur anche assordati i degni maestri di qualsiasi altro collegio. — Nè vogliamo pretendere ad altro fuorchè a meritare quella misura di lode che dipende da' soli giudici discreti e ben informati, i quali per mala sorte son sempre pochi.

Questi sanno che se son varii i ceti di maestri colti, studiosi, dati per principi di coscienza e senza interesse a giovare nell'insegnamento ai giovani di ogni condizione, la Compagnia merita pure d'essere noverata tra i primi.

Questi sanno, che pochi sono fuori della Compagnia i collegii, i cui maestri siano stati diretti con tanta cura ad entrare in questo ministero, con una scuola lor propria e normale, dove ad uno studio approfondito delle lingue dotte si accoppia ogni esercizio atto a formare sopra i classici greci, latini e nazionali il gusto della buona letteratura.

nen arte pedagogica e disciplinare, come sempre in fatto di lettere, guidandoli  
la retta via a que' progressi cui li stimola l'innato ardore per lo studio.

Il Prefetto, il Rettore, il Provinciale, i quali sono in contatto coi cittadini  
le autorità non possono impegnarsi per loro genio ad urtare le opinioni o gli interessi  
del pubblico, e tanto meno i Regolamenti sanciti ed accettati.

Quindi l'andamento degli studii è condotto nelle pubbliche scuole con quan-  
t'ampiezza si può desiderare fra le difficoltà di questi tempi, dove la civiltà non ha  
ancor distinto i confini della letteratura, che dev'essere comune a' giovani d'ine-  
vitabile vocazione, o alle classi laboriose de' cittadini.

Quindi i savii non ci confortano punto a renderci favorevole un maggior nu-  
mero di famiglie coll'imitare le scuole, onde i giovani si avvia-  
no al commercio e alle arti; chè mentre queste scuole non mancano a chi voglia giovarsene, o a quelli  
che preferisce agevolmente uno studio privato, troppo più importa il non lasciare che le  
generazioni future abbiano a rimproverarci d'aver sacrificato sconsigliatamente  
una sì sublime parte d'ogni civiltà, che è la classica letteratura (1).

Nè però invidiamo ad alcuno il concorrere che facciano più frequenti i giovani  
alla sua scuola. E la Compagnia, che fu sempre solita di andare allo scontro d'ignoranti  
ciulli ignoranti, e d'ogni razza d'idioti, essa che non fu mai straniera a niun  
paese, bella ed utile, essa che non ignorò la direzione degli studii militari, nè le ragioni

(1) Fin da' suoi tempi il Vossio nel libro *De artibus et scientiis Sinarum* lamenta  
l'abbandono delle lingue antiche e la sostituzione delle volgari, come un principio poco  
favorevole al progresso delle scienze e di ogn'altra letteratura: *qui nostro hoc saeculo missa  
ca et latina literatura vernaculas suas mox perituras obtrudunt et commendant linguas  
unum hoc affectare videntur, ut omnes perdant literas, sublatoque instrumento per quod  
pagentur scientias ad pristinum genus humanum redeat simplicitatem, nec quidquam im-  
mense sciamus, nisi quod subitus et naturalis nobis suggererit instinctus*. La Russia che  
aveva l'incivilimento de' suoi stendeva gli atti dell'accademia in latino, latini erano altre  
atti degli eruditi di Lipsia e di tanti altri ceti letterarii e scientifici. Gli stessi acattolici, a  
al latino come linguaggio della Chiesa, pure per diffondere più facilmente le loro dottrine  
scientifiche, e farsi leggere da tutti scrivevano in quella lingua, così fecero Bacone, Newton,  
Leibnitz, Eulero e quasi tutti gli antichi. Nè si dica che tale era lo stile de' tempi. Sarebbe  
un dir nulla. La ragione vera si è che questo era il mezzo unico fra dotti per un-  
iversalmente e con maggiore prestezza comunicarsi a vicenda le proprie cognizioni; e la lingua  
latina non essendo di alcuna nazione particolare, diveniva più facilmente la lingua comune  
tutte; e questo mezzo unico, finchè una lingua fra le volgari non si adottò generalmente  
tuttora ad essere necessario per la pronta e generale diffusione del sapere. Ora questa  
sostituzione di una lingua volgare in sostituzione alla latina non è sperabile: primo perchè,  
qual delle volgari che possa pretendere a questo primato e far tacere le gare delle altre che  
vorrebbero pretendervi? Secondo, perchè di fatto questa lingua volgare privilegiata non  
esiste, tedeschi, danesi, svedesi, inglesi, francesi e italiani scrivono la maggior parte delle  
scienze in lingua nazionale. Dunque coll'abbandono della lingua latina, noi ci priviamo  
lo strumento unico per universalmente e con più prestezza comunicarci scambievolmente  
i grossi delle scienze. Quando dunque vogliasi esclusa la lingua latina, e anche una delle  
volgari da adottarsi universalmente, non resterebbe per aver questa comunicazione generale  
che o i dotti imparassero tutte le lingue almeno di Europa, o si traducessero le singole  
cognizioni di ciascuna nazione nella lingua di tutte. Il primo mezzo non è possibile, oltrechè  
sarebbe dispendio di tempo, che potrebbe meglio impiegarsi nello studio delle scienze, il se-  
condo non è fattibile e sarebbe collo stesso incomodo di una gran perdita di tempo. Non  
dunque che il solo mezzo o della lingua latina, o di un'altra volgare adottata generalmente  
per tornare a noi, questa lingua volgare adottata da tutti, siccome a' nostri tempi, così, e  
più, ne' tempi addietro non era, i grandi uomini dunque, non perchè fosse tale lo stile de'  
ma con alta sapienza che loro mostrava il mezzo più acconcio al fine, volendo una gene-  
rale più pronta diffusione del sapere, usavano scrivendo della lingua latina. La parola è l'es-  
sere del pensiero. Più dunque la parola fra i dotti di varie lingue e nazioni sarà una, più  
facile sarà universale e pronta diverrà fra essi la comunicazione.

suoi antichi Padri siano stati sì favoriti dalla divina Provvidenza e della civica sollecitudine col moltiplicare tante istituzioni speciali, per cui si diffondano più largamente, che non si potrebbe da sola lei, i tesori d'ogni util sapere.

Ciò stesso vieppiù la conforta a lasciare, che i sistemi presenti si vadano modificando come da sè e secondo che via via lo richiede la pubblica esperienza. Per ciò stesso finchè non accade mutazione essa non negherà mai l'opera sua nel congiungere a possibile gli studii classici cogli studii accessorii voluti a maggior utilità de' molti, ma le sarà lecito di dare ogni principal cura all'intento, che le rimane più proprio, ed a quello della parte più illuminata de' cittadini, cioè alla coltura delle buone lettere.

Del quanto essa si valga e vi riesca sarà luogo a dire altrove — qui basti che del volerlo non le si faccia colpa.

La Compagnia presume di volere in ciò, non un suo vanto, non un servile ossequio alle proprie tradizioni, tanto meno un mezzo di perpetuare l'ignoranza nè le barbarie.

La natura stessa ha fissato una legge al progressivo svolgimento delle facoltà mentali nella prima età.

La prima ad acquistare sufficiente vigore è la memoria, succede quindi l'impero della fantasia e la passione del bello, le quali, ove siano state mantenute nell'innocenza, e rivolte ad oggetti degni, ed alle forme di quella vera bellezza, che non si disgiunge dal buono, avranno dato campo alla ragione di maturare i suoi proprii esercizi del riflettere, e del conchiudere a nuovi veri.

Fra gli oggetti intorno a' quali debba prima esercitarsi la memoria del fanciullo, non è dubbio che sian le lingue. — Queste sono gli stromenti più universali ad ogni ulteriore cognizione — e non determinano troppo immaturamente la piegatura dell'animo ad alcuna specialità, onde si soffochi per avventura un'inclinazione più sublime.

Ora fra le lingue altre sono più o men necessario strumento al commercio della vita pratica, altre sono come la chiave dell'antica sapienza, voce viva de' nostri maggiori, la quale mentre ci tramanda i tesori della storia, che è l'esperienza de' secoli, e i modelli nativi d'ogni bell'arte, produce perpetuamente rispetto alle nuove generazioni quell'effetto morale, che nella famiglia l'autorità paterna.

Perciò lo studio delle lingue moderne oltrechè più facile per molti rispetti pareva ragionevolmente serbato all'età dove l'uomo deve entrare nel mondo, — e si stimava che gli anni della puerizia fossero più utilmente spesi sotto la disciplina, per così dire, dell'antichità e presso alla fonte d'ogni sapere.

Certo, nè la storia ci dice nulla senza le origini, nè a reggere i passi della civiltà bastano le dottrine del presente o del secolo testè spirato, nè il buon gusto che è l'eletto fiore del discernimento così in ordine alle forme del costume, come dell'arti, potrà mantenersi, o, se alterato, rinnovarsi, quando non si richiamino incessantemente gli sguardi de' giovani a que' tipi originali dove l'antichità esprime così mirabilmente l'armonia dell'arte e della natura.

Ma si eserciti il giovane a trattare cogli antichi maestri, coll'imparare le loro lingue, già raccoglie e impara a gustare le forme primitive del bello, già arricchisce la fantasia d'immagini pure e nobili, già ha trovato la via ad un mondo spirituale e interiore, dove benchè tutta si dipinga la natura e la storia, pur impara a discernere sè stesso dal mondo sensibile, e lavora utilmente ad abbellire, a migliorare il fondo dell'anima propria.

Così si fa scala al terzo grado della sua educazione, e si trova esercitato a riflettere, fornita la mente d'oggetti tutti degnissimi ed utilissimi di riflessione, e usata già per l'istinto che dapprima lo conduceva, usato, dico, a venerare, e ad imitare gli

*Pellico.*

il corso preminare a una colta educazione può intendersi terminato prima che questa disciplina siasi attamente esercitata la ragione del giovane.

— Allora solo egli è maturo ai doveri dell'adolescenza, e in grado di ele fra le onorate carriere della vita pubblica quella, in che possa segnalarsi a ma pro della patria. Nè le lettere o la filosofia coltivate fin allora gli dovrebbero alcuni titoli tra i filosofi, o i letterati. — Ma sarebbero per niente più che un mento indifferente così agli studi classici o scientifici, come al foro o al Santu alle arti liberali.

Così inteso secondo natura il primo corso della colta educazione non ci r a sciogliere che due problemi. Il primo consiste nel dover trovare quel grado di a cui si possa ridurre lo studio delle lingue classiche per ottenere l'intento del cazione preliminare senza confonderlo con quello proprio d'un corso speciale c teratura, da riservarsi a chi vi ha vocazione dopo la filosofia, come tutti i cors ciali delle facoltà superiori. — Una discreta riduzione in questa parte consenti per avventura, che si potesse ornare la memoria e la fantasia del giovane di di vario genere, da eleggersi con molto riguardo alle forze, e all'andamento natura. Ma se non si vuole confondere questo corso preparatorio con la facoltà ciale di belle lettere, nè pur è da lasciare, che tanto se ne discosti da distogl giovani dall'acquistare destrezza nello scrivere e nel parlare latino. Che già i di tutta Europa deplorano il ritardo recato alle comunicazioni scientifiche dacc cessando l'uso d'una lingua comune, e consacrata dagli antichi maestri. Nè de filosofia sarebbe più a sperarsi, che lo studente trovasse agio od amore all'ese del comporre latinamente. Resta quindi che a giudicare del quanto giovì ridurre ampliare il campo che la lingua latina occupa nelle scuole di colta istituzione, privati cittadini ergano tribunale per pronunziare a norma d'un interesse pre ma si ascolti il voto de' dotti guidati da zelo più sublime per la miglior coltura d elemento di civiltà.

Il secondo problema consiste a trovare come nelle scuole destinate alle i genze di minor grado e alle classi commercianti o laboriose debbasi seguire il rale processo, per cui la memoria, la fantasia, la ragione sogliono gradatam manifestarsi e acquistar vigore. La prima difficoltà che qui si affaccia proced difetto, che possiamo supporre nelle doti intellettuali de' fanciulli raccolti in q scuole. — Ma non è questa la sola o la maggiore. — V'ha chi domanda q possa influire sopra il sentimento morale di tutta una generazione o sopra l'ar delle intime operazioni dell'individuo l'essere il fanciullo educato all'*utile* prim al *bello* — quanto l'essere educato al solo *presente*, senza conoscere l'*antichi* quanto l'imparare le lettere dell'alfabeto per descrizioni geometriche, anzichè p sola memoria delle figure e de' suoni, quanto l'affrettare l'esercizio del razi prima d'aver fornita la mente di qualche dovizia di cognizioni positive. Nelle domande non credo io che niun savio intenda o di censurare alcun sistema ad da queste scuole quasi peccasse decisamente per l'uno de' due estremi propo tanto meno di imporre, che per correggere gli inconvenienti dell'uno si abb l'altro.

Certo però sono esse degne di riflessione; e a sciogliersi col maggior pro l'educazione popolare esigono il concorso dell'esperienza, non meno che d'un studio del pubblico bene. — Onde col solo affacciarsi, quelle domande semplicis ed altre simili che qui non ripeto vietano giustamente a chicchessia così l'entusia come l'eccessiva diffidenza in riguardo di ogni nuovo trovato di che altri vogli saggio con la mira di raggiungere il meglio.



reforme, che paion desiderate ne' metodi delle sue scuole, nè tuttavia disconosce il suo dovere. — Se altri potè precipitare qualche giudizio sfavorevole alla condotta ch'essa tiene — essa è però persuasa d' avere in suo favore gli uomini dotti e prudenti, e non aver faticato indarno nel resistere al corso di certe opinioni rispettabili, ma troppo esclusive, o non per anco ridotte a chiari termini.

Resta ora a vedere quanto essa pecchi nell' insegnamento religioso, e nella disciplina con che dà opera all' educazione de' giovani affidati alle sue cure e principalmente ne' convitti.

In perpetuo contatto com' io fui per sei anni da Melan coi due convitti di Savoia informato dell' andamento di quelli di Friburgo e del Belgio posso ben attestare, che l' esposizione ragionata della fede e della morale cattolica, va ivi congiunta con una disciplina, la quale promuove l' energia giovanile ai sensi di onore, e in uno la tempera a gentilezza. — Ma troppo più della mia vale qui l' unanime testimonianza di tanti padri e di tante madri di famiglia, che già raccolgono i frutti de' sacrificii voluti sostenere per procacciare ai loro figli l' educazione ne' nostri collegii.

Or da due anni rividi il Piemonte, e visitai ogni anno col P. Provinciale tutti i convitti che la Compagnia dirige negli Stati Sardi. — Ebbi occasione di vedere particolarmente quelli di Modena, di Reggio e di Roma, i quali sono di fondazione anteriore; nè potei non domandarmi cento volte perchè la Compagnia non segua ne' suoi convitti di Piemonte il medesimo sistema, che tiene in Savoia? — Perchè in tutta l' Italia non è un convitto simile a quelli sì applauditi di Svizzera? — Ma perchè ripigliava pur tosto, perchè v' avrebbe da essere? o con quali mezzi vi si trapianterebbe?

Prima non è pur vero, che l' insegnamento religioso inclini qui alla misticità, e tenda a snervare le virtù morali o manchi del sussidio della scienza. Vi è anzi efficacissima la scuola del ragionare e del vivere cristiano; e piacesse a Dio che all' intera sua efficacia concorressero sempre le impressioni, che i giovani ricevono talvolta dal loro contatto col mondo.

Ma niuno di noi esige, che il mondo si faccia più discreto, nè che i giovani cerchino scampo nella misantropia e nella solitudine, — e vedo che la cura così de' maestri nelle scuole, come de' catechisti, e de' direttori di spirito nelle congregazioni è assiduamente rivolta a fare che la religione non sia per i giovani nè un giogo, nè un perditempo, nè una cerimonia, nè una mera scienza, o un vano trattenimento della fantasia, ma diventi norma della riflessione nella vita pratica, e freno alle passioni del cuore.

Che diresti anzi se io ti rivelassi su ciò una parola di S. Francesco Borgia, la quale ci viene all' occorrenza ricordata? Non dobbiamo, scriveva egli, non dobbiamo fare i nostri convittori troppo religiosi. Possibile! un Santo e Generale de' Gesuiti s' esprimeva così? Sì, mio caro, e noi con esso; non già perchè la religione non prenda a governare tutta la vita dei giovani nobilitandone le mire e moderandone le passioni, ma affinchè le troppe pratiche di culto, o una forma determinata di disciplina sacra, non venga in loro a nuocere allo spontaneo sviluppo d' ogni buon germe, che abbia a fruttare in avvenire.

Quanto alla disciplina i convitti aperti fin qui alla Compagnia in Italia paiono essersi stabiliti giusta le reminiscenze serbate nella famiglia fin dall' epoca della soppressione de' suoi collegii. Queste furon fatte rivivere tanto più spontaneamente, quanto tutto insieme risorgeva un antico ordine di cose, caro a coloro, che fondavano le nuove case di educazione da affidarsi a' nostri religiosi. — Nè però lasciarono questi di andar modificando que' primi statuti d' ordin domestico, secondo che gli usi comuni del viver civile si discostarono mano a mano dalle foggie antiche. — Anzi così va

di quelle brutte delazioni, cui ci rimproveri di educare i nostri allievi.

No, Gioberti, non mi occorre per anco di contendere sopra la moralità di sto mezzo.

Tu l' hai per sì disonesto, che non è onestà di fine, che lo giustifichi. — L a chi abbia altri motivi di trattarne, il chiederti conto di ciò che in siffatta sen gli paia esagerato. Certo Platone, ammette le reciproche delazioni come debite cittadini zelanti delle leggi e del ben pubblico. — Ma te la potrai intendere con Chè qui non mi occorre stabilire un punto di morale, ma solo negare un fatto, e gratuitamente supponevi.

Le denunzie reciproche, segrete, ossia spontanee, o promosse da chi regge volute per istatuto, o liberamente consentite dal comune, abbiansi il valore, che vuole ; certo non sono a giudizio della Compagnia, da aversi per acconcia sì della disciplina di un convitto di giovani ; nè virtù da insegnarsi, da commendarsi da esigersi in quell' età ; nè un fatto, che tu possa notare come proprio e comune nostre case di educazione.

La vile inclinazione della spia non si manifesterebbe in un convittore senza contrare l' opportuno rimedio. I Superiori discernono agevolmente la fede, che sano prestare a delazioni di tali testimonii, ancor soggetti a tante passioncelle evidia, di amicizia, di rispetti umani ; e sanno, che i primi a perdere ogni credito si reggessero a norma di quelle, sarebbero essi medesimi.

Bensi mantengono il diritto di vegliare, di investigare, di interrogare — per questo diritto sta congiunto all' ufficio di padre e di istitutore ; nè compromette la scienza o l' onore del giovane. Anzi è necessario talvolta a salvare lui ed i compagni da que' pericoli che sono a temersi negli abusi, cui sia concesso il durarla sotto il bra del segreto.

E l' esercizio di questo diritto uopo è lasciarlo alla prudenza di ciascun Superiore — senza che alcuno di essi possa esigere, che la sua prudenza sia ugualmente plaudita da tutti — ma senza lasciare nè anco a te, od a me, o a chicchessia l' libertà di accusare o i suoi atti, o tutto il sistema del suo governo, o tutta insieme la regola dei convitti, se in fatti di estrema gelosia, egli che ne aveva tra le mani operò altrimenti da quello, che per avventura paresse a noi doversi.

In tutte le case di educazione accade agevolmente, che i meno disciplinati suppongono circondati di spie, e segnano a dito per ispie que' che non sono dalla — In tutte le case di educazione s' incontrano agevolmente certe tempre di alcuni cui piace questo tristo mestiero. — E in tutte per quanto si combatta e la prevenzione di quelli, e la viziosa inclinazione di questi, accadon fatti, in cui la sorveglianza e la prudenza del Superiore sembra aver favorito l' una e l' altra. — Or che è a concluderne ?

A me pare che il convitto sia un privato santuario, da aversi per così inalienabile come la famiglia, il cui governo posto in fuori dell' altrui sindacato, per allo stato bastevole guarentigia della sua bontà, quando è tra le mani d' un padre, il cui senno, la religione, la condotta morale e civile non lasciano luogo a grandi spetti.

Il filosofo può insinuarvi i suoi consigli, i parenti, gli amici vi hanno accesso, ma non è inquisitore o giudice, che vi alzi tribunale a nome del pubblico per i gozii affidati dalla natura ai diritti paterni, finchè questi non siano volti in evidente abuso.

Naturali Sindaci de' nostri convitti, oltre ai Provinciali incaricati di visitarli di mantenervi le regole già note al pubblico, e da esso consentite, sono ancora q

principii a fare la parte loro, secondando opportunamente le nostre cure. — Tant'occhi e tanta pietà, e potrei aggiungere in riguardo ai più de' genitori de' nostri alunni, tanto senno e zelo pel pubblico bene, valgano a guarentire al tuo tribunale la buona direzione, che per noi si vuol dare all' indole ed alla vita di quella parte sì eletta della società.

Ma non so perchè non mi sdegni di vedermi trascinato con te a discutere questa sorta di sospetti, la cui malizia, si tradisce sì bene da sè. So bene che nel corso d' un' accurata educazione non tutti i giorni sono ugualmente lieti; che l' affetto d' un padre e d' una madre quanto brama migliore la riuscita del figlio tanto è più industrioso a tormentarsi, a temere, ad esagerarsi i difetti, che spontaneo talora impreveduti col crescer degli anni, ma che trovando il loro rimedio ne' principii già piantati in cuore, solo abbisognano che si prosegua la medesima disciplina, e si maturi la riflessione. — So ancora pur troppo, che un sistema di educazione benchè ottimo, non giunge però a correggere radicalmente ogni tempra di giovani; e che nel restituire un convittore ai suoi parenti, non possiamo sempre sperare, che sian per benedire le nostre fatiche.

Ma non so, che da alcuna famiglia ci sia mai giunto il rimprovero, d' aver non formato giovani sì abbiatti quali tu supponi universalmente i nostri alunni, cui governi o il timore soverchio dell' occhio altrui, o vaghezza di farla da spione o da delatore (1).

Sarà dunque per avventura più vero che noi ci studiamo, o per imperizia riusciamo sgraziatamente a foggjar allievi fiacchi, inerti, morti ad ogni utile della repubblica, nè atti a trascinare la vita fuorchè per esser d' inciampo o di vergogna ai generosi concittadini?

Vedano le famiglie, vedano essi medesimi i molti che usciti dalle nostre case

(1) Non so se a supporre lo spirito di delazione dominante ne' nostri convitti più t'abbia condotto la regola, per cui, siccome accenni, i socii stessi della Compagnia si manifestano reciprocamente al Superiore, o siasi stato argomento il commentario, che ne faceva con la politica sua fantasia M. Michelet. Quel gesuitismo, spirito di polizia e di delazione, quelle vili abitudini dello scolare *spione*, le quali dal collegio e dal convitto, non meno che dal *Convento* minaccia, al dire di lui, di spandersi per tutti i rami della società, non ti avrebbe per avventura ispirato parole sì gravi, se meglio di lui avessi guardato al nostro Istituto, e al modo di schietta amicizia, che regna fra noi. Avresti veduto insieme alla regola, che ci impegna a manifestare al Superiore ciò che l'uno sappia dell' altro, le condizioni appostevi, cioè, salvo sempre il sigillo Sacramentale, e il naturale segreto di consultore, salva la carità nel cuore e nelle parole, salvo, per cura del Superiore, l' onore di tutti. — Avresti veduto, i motivi tutti sani e ragionevoli, per cui è imposta; e quello spirito di semplicità e di schiettezza, con cui ci è dato di godere che ogni occhio vede al possibile fin nel fondo dell' anima nostra, quella sincerità con cui vogliamo che chi ci è padre, ci conosca per ogni via, per regolarci secondo i nostri bisogni e le nostre forze, anzichè parerti cosa sì abbiatta e tormentosa e immorale, avrebbe per avventura invaghito. Avresti veduto, che questa regola non è pur così sola di S. Ignazio, o così tutta de' soli Gesuiti degeneri dal suo Istituto, che non sia parimente fra quelle attribuite a S. Agostino e seguite da' Religiosi del suo nome, e con ispeciali sanzioni proclamata dall' ordine di S. Domenico e di S. Francesco. Avresti di più potuto osservare, che questa regola si propone in particolare, a chi domanda l' ingresso nella Compagnia, affinchè non vi trovi soggetto se non dopo consideratala, e consentitala liberamente. Ma all' Istituto istesso vanno ancora congiunte le Bolle de' Sommi Pontefici, che lo approvano con questa regola espressamente; e del nissun abuso seguitone coll' andare del tempo ti avrebbe dato solenne sicurtà quella con cui Clemente XIII (7 gennaio 1765) dopo consultati per lettere tutti i Vescovi, non dubitò di opporre ai nostri detrattori il giudizio di tutta la Chiesa cattolica non meno in favore delle nostre regole, che della condotta religiosa della Compagnia fino a quell' età. — Finalmente se avessi considerato, che ad amare, ed osservare in pratica questa nostra regola s' esige un' umiltà, una carità, un discernimento, proprio solo di chi voglia davvero la perfezione religiosa — non avresti potuto stumarci così fuor di senno, che la volessimo propria di un convitto di giovanetti, cui sono ad insegnarsi gli elementi primi della dottrina cristiana.



giunti.

Se l'amor dell'ordine, e il rispetto ad ogni autorità è ciò, che altri ti denegano ne' nostri alunni per fiacchezza e obbiezione d'animo, per me e per la Compagnia sponderanno non che i genitori, ma i Principi e le nazioni libere ciò essere principio di ogni educazione, e tu potresti ricordare il luogo (Introd. alla filosofia Tom. I) dove accennasti « che il combattere al presente con maggiore studio a sostenere l'autorità anzichè per la libertà è pregio di quel sapiente coraggio, con cui la natura sa suole accorrere dove il rischio è maggiore ».

Se l'attività della mente è quella che anima la vita, e feconda gli Stati, se l'attività vivacissima ne' giovanetti, ha pur da produrre i frutti maturando all'età della fatica e della riflessione, se vuol essere governata da principii saldi, e ridotta da mille sentieri per dove si stancherebbe invano o correrebbe a crear rovine, e non i savii, se gli studi delle nostre scuole, per essere quali sono, si oppongano a questi principii; anzi lo stesso gridare di altri, che questi studi o sian troppo severi, o troppo lunghi, nè così varii come vorrebbero, da improvvisare imberbi dottori, sappiano ragionare di tutto, potrà valermi di testimonio, che ove alcuna cosa volesse si andare da noi riformando nell'educazione de' giovani, certo non è o l'assenza della fatica, o il difetto di raziocinio, o l'inerzia della mente, o la confusione dei metodi, o la libertà de' principii, o la licenza della fantasia. E vogliamo sperare, che l'età, in cui i nostri scolari sono per intraprendere o i corsi delle facoltà superiori, o la carriera degli impieghi, o la cura degli affari domestici, più sia per giovare ad lor util progresso l'abito contratto di applicare seriamente lo spirito non che in scuola, ma ancor nelle rispettive Accademie di gramatica, di rettorica, di filosofia non molte notizie leggermente raccolte, con que' metodi che ottimi sì ad agevolare anzi a sfiorare le scienze, riescono per avventura meno felicemente ad esercitare la riflessione, e a maturare le forze mentali.

Che se anche la fatica della sola mente riesce di per sè ad infiacchire quell'parte, onde consta l'uomo, e che deve pur essergli strumento al più delle opere ad invigorire tutto l'essere del giovane tu domandi, che abbiam pietà del suo corpo, e non lo snerviamo in una forma di vita monotona e sedentaria — ti risponderanno le mura delle nostre case, e i cortili, e i giardini, e le ville: — che con pubblico o i fondatori li hanno disposti all'uso de' convittori, tali prestano assiduamente il lor servizio (1). — A Chambery il collegio si è sottoposto ad una spesa vistissima per solo stendere i cortili de' giuochi in un giardino attiguo. — A Genova è rimesso in uso a pro degli scolari esterni la così detta *pia opera del Casino*, a fondazione del P. Lomellini, la quale fra gli altri utili offre a que' giovani, che sarebbero isolati nelle loro famiglie un'onestissima occasione di consecrare una parte del giovedì a varii esercizi ginnastici. — Vedi anzi tutti i nostri convitti, e i soppres-

(1) Quanto a tutto questo e ad altre imputazioni che altri ci fa di soverchio rigore e disciplina ti citerò un tratto del nostro Provinciale P. Bresciani, che fu per ben tre volte Superiore a Torino nel reale Convitto de' nobili al Carmine. Egli dice adunque nella sua prefazione all'*Arte di governare* del Binet — « Volesse Dio che tutti i governanti seguissero le massime della dolcezza che propone nell'aureo suo libro il Binet! Se ne vedrebbero mirabili frutti in tutte le case religiose non solo, ma eziandio nei collegi d'educazione, ne' quali o una falsa dolcezza, o più ancora un mal inteso rigore sono cagione che nelle vergini e generose anime de' collegi i germi delle più belle virtù o non allignino, o in sul primo mettere e gemmare perdano divelti o inariditi. I giovani sono capaci d'ogni gran cosa: ma ove una ruvida e pesante cura pesi sul cuor tenerello, che loro cresce animoso in petto, ei si raggrinza, inviliace, e si spegne, e ogni voglia di ben operare non germina che il pessimo frutto de' vizi » (*Ediz. del Ma-*  
— pag. 8. Torino).

giorno vi hanno i loro tempi da alternare con la fatica dello studio l'esercizio del corpo — e ti so dir io con che gusto di loro tutti.

Ma se tu avevi sotto gli occhi tali nostre case, dove non è questo esercizio, potresti osservarle alquanto, e se in quelle non è spazio, se non manca per colpa nostra se son poche le prive di quelle comodità, se all'infelicità locale delle medesime, supplisce al possibile, — vedi tu chi possa essere stato ferito da' tuoi colpi; certo non siamo noi.

Ma ti vedo a sorridere. E che intendi? — Non vi vantate sempre così invulnerabili, pare, che tu voglia dire; che è pur un punto, in cui vi ho tocchi al vivo. — qual è? — Non vi ho feriti nel vostro debole con quella noterella, che contrappone a' vostri i convitti di altri religiosi?

Caro Gioberti! E vuoi tu a mio dispetto, ch'io scorga una tua malizia, dove avresti voluto credere che tu adempivi un atto generoso? — T'era sfuggita altrove (1) una sentenza, che dichiarava l'*Ecclesiastico per la qualità del suo stato*, non avere potuto aver la perizia opportuna per fare l'eccellente padre di famiglia, il cittadino, il mercante ec. Quindi l'educazione indirizzata da soli ecclesiastici snervare bene spesso ed infiacchire gli animi — nè valere che a far dei monaci. — Il commendare che ora fai qui i convitti d'alcuni istituti regolari come degni della fiducia della tua patria mi potea valere quanto una savia modificazione, che tu avessi voluto fare indirettamente a quel parlare non abbastanza considerato.

Coll'aderire in ciò alle riflessioni che ti venivano insinuate dal P. Taparelli (1) dove nella nota cXL. al suo *Saggio Teoretico del diritto naturale* egli cerca d'interpretare la tua proposizione nel senso più plausibile) tu mi parevi dar prova di quella indole sincera, che vuole la verità, e rettifica così ingenuamente i proprii giudizi, come quelli in che reputi doversi rettificare gli altrui.

Ma invece di aver qui la mira ad un tuo dovere avresti tu mirato al solo piacere di suscitare qualche senso d'invidia tra alcuni religiosi? E ti pare che la civiltà italiana e cattolica, qual tu l'intendi, sia di quelle che vogliano in sussidio l'intervento delle passioni? Avresti tu i tuoi concittadini più docili ad accogliere il tuo cattolicesimo quando loro avessi procacciato la commedia de' religiosi divisi per mutue gare interessate? Se fu già tuo pensiero di sbandire questa sorte di educazione indirizzata da soli sacerdoti, quanto non ti perdonerei più volentieri, il dichiararlo francamente che non il presumere di riuscirvi per opera di meschina rivalità.

Ma sappi, che i nostri fratelli non lascian pure, che loro invidiamo la sorte d'essere separati per espressa tua commendatizia dal novero di coloro, contro di cui bandisci sì fieramente la croce.

E che? dicon essi, ci ha dunque il Gioberti per tali istitutori, che tengano più del laico che non dell'ecclesiastico? — O intende egli di scemare pian piano il numero degli educatori ecclesiastici, sicchè non ci eccettui ora dal bando, se non per intormentarlo quando che sia più tardi? — E in questi supposti non fa egli più onore a' primi, cui volle assalire, che a noi?

Certo per quanto siano diversi i metodi d'insegnamento o di educazione seguiti da varii istituti religiosi, questa non è nella Chiesa una dissonanza od una gara, ma è l'unico modo con cui il medesimo spirito di religione, di carità, di sapienza può giungere a sopperire alle tante esigenze sì diverse così delle famiglie, come delle varie tempre di fanciulli. — Niun metodo umano è così perfetto in quest'opera delle scuole e de' convitti, che per esso si debba escludere l'utile che si può aspettare dagli altri. — Nè sola la carità fraterna collega tutti gli istituti religiosi in tal maniera, che l'o-

(1) Introd. allo stud. della Fil. t. 1, p. 198.

al sistema cattolico di educazione pubblica, e scorga questa andata in gran parte solo clero, e specialmente ad istituti regolari, e le regole di questi diversamente contrattate e dirette a diversi fini di immediata occorrenza, e tutte sancite così onorevolmente dall' autorità della religione e degli Stati, e il loro esercizio mantenuto in vigore per la libera emulazione, e la loro varietà cresciuta sempre di secolo in secolo col manifestarsi nuovi bisogni più speciali, viene naturalmente a concepire questo sistema come uno insieme e secondo, e nato non già per distruggersi l' una parte nuocendo l' altra, ma per imporre ad un tempo riverenza, fiducia, gratitudine. — I cui disegni non possono esigere mai il pubblico vitupero : poichè è cosa immorale il promuovere il volgo, e la gioventù a disprezzare il menomo de' suoi maestri, ma trovano il loro medio nella virtù eminentemente educatrice della Chiesa, madre di tutti i siffatti istituti, la quale camminando innanzi ad ogni nuova generazione, le è scorta all' interno re ciò che occorra, senza mai insultare a nulla di antico.

Queste viste, mi pare, inducono naturalmente a temere, che qualunque Ordine d' istitutori sia vilipeso, ossia a cagione della sua regola, ossia perchè da quella essersi in qualche parte allontanato, — un simile vilipendio è minacciato a tutti quelli stessi che ne siano più espressamente eccettuati da coloro che assumono di venire in ciò il giudizio della Chiesa.

Laonde non sarei soli a respingere la fiaccola dell' invidia, che avesti per ventura sperato d' accendere a nostra mutua divisione. — Com' è pari il diritto, lo scopo, e ingiurioso a tutti il torto fatto a qualsiasi di loro, niuna varietà di nomi, che si osservi tra Barnabiti, o Scolopii, o Gesuiti darà luogo a tal passione, li faccia distruggersi a vicenda.

Veramente la prova a cui ci metti c' induce ad osservare in quale più per maniera possiamo gli uni e gli altri renderci utili secondo le rispettive regole, quanto non riusciresti più felicemente, se con maggior virtù conciliatrice ti volgi a favorire la libera emulazione che conviene fra gli istituti, i quali meritano fin la fiducia della Chiesa ? quanto non guarentiresti miglior servizio alla patria, se del pari i maestri, cui essa soglia affidare le sue speranze fossero impegnati per l' onore della religione e dell' onore ad esercitare quanto san meglio il lor ministero sotto l' ispezione della Chiesa, che non volendoli divisi, o vilipesi, o abbandonati l' impero d' un' opinione sì poco spassionata, quale tu prendi a far prevalere ?

Ma vuoi tu assolutamente che la Compagnia di Gesù si abbia in questa come legittimamente accusata, ed in necessità di difendersi ? — Proseguirò a dire e con tanto miglior animo, quanto so, che in più d' un capo, l' Apologia di quella di tutti gli ordini religiosi educatori.

Parlerò tuttavia come se si trattasse di noi soli ; perchè non è giusto, nè dannoso il denunziarti i nostri complici, mentre nè hai diritto di cercarli, nè di averne sospetto.

Confesso adunque, che la Compagnia sovraneamente gelosa del custodire l' innocenza de' giovani andrà sempre a rilento nell' allargare loro le vie di contatto col mondo. — Ma non credo che sia filosofo cristiano o cittadino, il quale non vada in favore dell' educazione de' figli quel riparo, e quell' isolamento con che l' aguzzatore protegge il suo seminato ; imperocchè se si vuole che il fanciullo si faccia subito alla vita del mondo, ei dee però passare per gradi a vederlo, a trattarlo, a conversare con esso. — E que' gradi non si possono determinare dal mondo, bensì dal concerto del patrio senno col senno degli educatori medesimi, secondo che la temperanza morale della gioventù, ed il pubblico costume siano più o meno discosti dalle norme della ragione e del viver cristiano.

Confesso ancora, che i giovani non escono dai nostri convitti, o quali sareb-

comunemente i peggiori, in quelle parti che sono essenziali all'educazione — e i frutti di questa nostra non compensassero quelli che son proprii d'un'altra, nè possono raccogliersi agevolmente per la medesima cura.

I padri poi e le madri che preferiscono, o son costretti ad adottare pe' loro figliuoli un sistema qualunque di educazione pubblica, già sanno, che l'influenza di questa è diversa assai da quella della domestica istituzione. Sotto la cura immediata de' parenti e dei maestri privati si protrae per certo modo la puerizia, si coltivano più soavemente gli affetti, si formano i modi a maggior grazia. Laddove il collegio matura più presto il senno, e prepara più immediatamente il fanciullo al commercio della vita; nè ciò può accadere senza che il cuore e le maniere vestano un non so che di virile, e talvolta di soldatesco, men bello per avventura all'occhio materno di quel che sia il fare carezzevole e somnesso, che sta sì bene a quell'età. Questa differenza negli effetti de' due sistemi è necessaria; si può metter in questione, quale de' due sia da preferirsi. — Ma è difficile il temperarli così, che l'uno e l'altro producano il medesimo vantaggio, e chi li voglia congiunti al possibile in un convitto, chi sa che non commendi il sistema de' convitti italiani, dove a differenza degli altri le camerate constano d'un picciol numero di alunni, i quali menano vita da fratelli sotto gli occhi d'un particolare prefetto.

Che poi l'affetto de' giovani convittori si leghi ai religiosi loro padri e maestri non si potrebbe rammentare come colpa di questi. I genitori assennati non vogliono pur altro, se non che gli educatori de' loro figliuoli, sappiano temperare per modo il vigore della disciplina, da sapersi guadagnare i cuori.

Ma si vuol dar ad intendere che i Gesuiti si fanno amare così smisuratamente e sopra ogni cosa di questo mondo, fino a strappare i loro alunni agli affetti di famiglia e di patria.

Questa è l'enormità che dee renderci più odiosi! il farci tanto amare!

— Come? si vorrebbe pur dire, voi avete tanta impudenza da esser trovati degni della fiducia e dell'amore de' vostri scolari, sicchè si mostrino talora più contenti tra voi, che non in casa de' lor genitori? — Non dovrete voi piuttosto ripetere ai giovani, che il collegio è una prigione dond'è a volersi fuggir al più presto? Non potreste voi sollecitarli a cercare spesso di vedere i parenti e gli amici di fuori affini di partecipare al possibile ai loro interessi, alle loro vicende, alle consolazioni, ai disagi di ciascuno di essi, sicchè nè l'amor dello studio nè altro dovere del convitto dovesse mai distogliere la fantasia od il cuore dagli affetti di famiglia? E poi perchè lasciare che i giovani amino voi, e vi abbiano in concetto di padri affettuosi, di maestri dotti, di religiosi sinceri? Non è anzi debito vostro di screditarvi al loro cospetto, sicchè non trovino per nulla presso di voi ciò, che loro è tolto, dacchè sono passati dalla casa paterna al collegio?

Ma son questi rimproveri da farci seriamente? Per dar ad essi alcun che di grave si vuol supporre, che snaturiamo i giovani, e smorziamo nei loro petti l'amore filiale, l'amor di patria, sicchè non sappiano più amare e gridare fuorchè *Gesuiti, Gesuiti!* — Per me direi, che se il fatto fosse pur quale si dà avrebbe tanto del divino, da non poter altro che riputarne bene. Chè si sa pure, quest'amore de' giovani non cercarlo i Gesuiti nè con leziosità indegne, le quali avviliscono al cospetto degli alunni il carattere di educatore, nè col rallentare l'autorità della disciplina. — Il fanciullo poi, o lo scolare anche adulto non hanno pur al mondo un interesse da nulla, in vista del quale il Gesuita possa guadagnarli con favori, e con servigii. Nè basta il dire ad un ragazzo: *amatevi*, ma il padre stesso e la madre, e Dio medesimo, non guadagnano il cuore di lui, se non per tali attrattive e sì potenti, e sì virtuose, e sì conformi ai sensi della natura che riescano a vincere le passioncelle e la leggerezza

lo, ch'è la base di tutti i doveri di società, *onora il padre e la madre*. — E finalmente, le relazioni del convittore con la famiglia, ancorchè ristretta a regola son ben lungi ancora dal fare che il figlio dimentichi, od ignori il più leggero e tenue motivo aver sempre la casa paterna per centro de' suoi affetti.

Or se con tutto ciò è ancor loogo in quei cuori ingenui all'amor de' maestri, l'amor de' Gesuiti, convien dunque supporre, che questi raccolgano in sè agli occhi loro alunni tanti titoli, che secondo natura, ed ogni legge di virtù, glieli rendano cari. E certo in essi scorgono alcun che del padre e della madre, in essi il pregio del padre, in essi il titolo di benefattori, in essi il merito di una condotta lodevole. — Ma ciò non basterebbe a metterli tanto sopra ogni cosa del mondo, — se non si aggiungesse la qualità di Religiosi. Per questa infatti, e ognuno lo sa, accade che talora giovani alunni giungano a preferire la Compagnia alla propria famiglia; per le attrattive di religione, e di tal religione che innalza i cuori a sensi eroici, e li accende ad opere troppo maggiori, che non siano i comuni doveri di casa, o delle carriere civili. — Ma se ciò ha luogo ogni anno pel fatto di più d'un allievo della Compagnia, se ciò ha luogo al termine dell'educazione quando l'età, e l'esercizio del ragionare, e l'osservazione han posto un giovane in grado di eleggere uno stato di vita, se ciò ha luogo in mezzo ai contrasti sì soliti ad opporsi dalla natura e dal mondo, ogni risoluzione generosa, mi pare bensì che quel risolversi che faccia ognun di storo a lasciar ogni cosa per seguire la nostra professione, sia un atto superiore alla natura e alla sapienza mondana, ma niente irragionevole, niente da deplorarsi, da attribuirsi alla sola grazia di Dio.

Ciò che l'antica Roma giungeva legittimamente ad ottenere in favor della patria, ch'era il più ampio cerchio, cui la sua educazione giungesse a stendere gli affetti del giovane, non è meraviglia, che la religione cattolica l'ottenga in vista di una sfera troppo più ampia e nobile di interessi, quali sono quelli della Chiesa universale e del Sacerdozio apostolico.

Non già, che lo scopo dell'educazione cattolica sia di formare soli Apostoli e Gesuiti — o che sia possibile ad accadere che molti giovani portino la mira sì alta; ma perchè se l'educazione cattolica non tradisce il sistema di Cristo e della Chiesa, non può non accadere, che fra le menti giovanili le più forti e le più veggenti sian tratte a stendere il pensiero oltre ai comuni confini della vita domestica e civile, sino a vagheggiare l'esercizio d'una carità universale, e diretta all'eterna salute di tutti i popoli.

Di fatto non sono già i giovani d'animo pusillo od inerte quelli, che vengano a crescere il numero de' nostri fratelli. Anche questo si sa pur bene. Or non sono che tali, che siansi potuti guadagnare all'amore della Compagnia o per vaghezza di mistico ozio, o per la speranza di godere le perpetue delizie del convitto. — Ma le attrattive più efficaci a condurli a questa nostra milizia son quelle appunto, che inghiscono del mestier della guerra gli animi generosi. — Se non che a voler cingere la spada, basta una generosità di mero istinto; quando a chi venga ad arruolarsi nella Compagnia di Gesù è pur necessaria una generosità illuminata dalle verità eterne e maturata da riflessione.

Onde anche per questo canto è esclusa qui l'opera dell'entusiasmo, è rimossa al possibile ogni illusione della fantasia, o posta a tali prove che abbia a dissipare.

E che farebbe la Compagnia di tali novizi, che giunti a dover assaggiare i rigori della vita religiosa fossero per ricredersi dei be' sogni, onde si voglia supporre scemati? — O quale docilità di obbedienza si vorrebbe promettere da tali alunni, sì ti, vivaci, forniti in somma di facoltà non mediocri, quando non recassero eziandio una volontà liberamente risoluta di perseverare sotto la regola comune? Troppo



all'aspetto di quelli gli si veda accendere ed esultare l'anima, ma li consideri, li paragoni coi beni, o coi cimenti soliti ad incontrarsi altrove, e deliberi da sè con Dio non tanto interrogando l'istinto della pietà, quanto la vera prudenza cristiana.

E queste cose saranno forse men vere per ciò, che vien narrato o dal Goldoni, dal Cardinale Quirini, o d'altri, che, cioè nell'età, in cui loro conveniva eleggere uno stato di vita, alcun Gesuita loro abbia proposto di deliberare se non fosse per loro meglio l'entrare nella Compagnia?

Certo se tali giovani non fossero stati di quelli, in cui traspare un'anima dritta, forte, capace di riflessione e di perseveranza, mi sarebbe agevole di dichiarare che il Gesuita, il quale loro abbia fatto cenno di questo modo di vivere nostro non per nulla buon interprete, o buon procuratore della Compagnia: — ma della sua imprudenza doversi incolpare lui solo. — E perchè questa sorta di indiscrezione per quanto sia perdonabile in qualche giovin maestro, era da prevenirsi con le possibili cautele, per ciò tutti i maestri sono avvisati e dal *Ratio Studiorum*, e da' Superiori di non intromettersi nel guidare i loro allievi all'elezione dello stato, e stiano nei limiti del loro uffizio esigendo dagli scolari niente più che studio, disciplina, pietà cristiana.

Ma supposto, che ad un giovane fornito di mente retta, di cuor generoso, il quale combattuto, inesperto o cerca consiglio, o sta in pericolo di perdere nell'irresolutezza i più begli anni, un Gesuita lo induca a riflettere di proposito sopra i varii stati di vita, intorno a cui possa determinarsi, — e fra questi noverì lo stato religioso, la professione medesima, in cui egli si trova beato, — e come gliene dichiarerà i doveri, così gliene mostri i conforti — e ove quello tema di essere ributtato per inetto, gli dichiarerà le condizioni volute, e in somma gli vada agevolando il libero esercizio della propria riflessione, affinchè comunque sia egli per risolvere lo faccia con sufficiente lume, è forse in tutto ciò alcun male? Che cosa suona quella parola di Cristo: *qui potest capere capiat*? Non è essa un invito, uno stimolo a quelle salutari risoluzioni, ch'egli andava proponendo alle anime elette? — E finchè l'Istituto, la vita della Compagnia sono avuti dalla Chiesa per commendevoli, il Gesuita che egli ingiuria o alla Religione, o all'onestà, coll'aprire la via, a chi fosse per volerlo seguire?

Anzi più, giacchè ho voluto affrontare francamente questa sì odiosa questione e dissiparne le ombre, non è egli così legittima, domanderei, la brama, la diligenza con cui un corpo morale, procacci ne' termini dell'onestà, la propria conservazione come è legittima nell'individuo, necessaria in ogni essere vivente? — Ora quali sono i termini in che tanto ci voglia esser concesso! Ed io mostrerò, che li restringiamo più assai, che il mondo non sa volere. Esso ha l'elezione d'uno stato di vita per cui da farsi tutta con quel tanto di lume, che è porto della ragion naturale a discernere ciò, che conviene al bene di questa vita; a noi la fede e l'Istituto insegnano a considerare quest'atto come da farsi cristianamente, cosicchè ad esso concorra col lume della ragione e della prudenza naturale il lume delle verità eterne, e dello Spirito Santo. A noi la Fede, e i Santi Padri, e l'Istituto, e l'esperienza insegnano, che intraprendere con una coscienza illuminata, e nobile risoluzione la pratica de' consigli evangelici nella profession religiosa, non è motivo di natura, che mai conduca, sola dirige e muove una grazia sovranaturale, e non punto comune a tutti i giovani, ma speciale a coloro, cui Dio la concede.

Ora posta questa dottrina, che crediamo ed insegniamo costantemente, è evidente un umano artificio, cui possiamo aver fiducia per promuovere alcuno alla vita religiosa. — O non sarebbe egli un contraddire la nostra Fede, un distruggere le nostre speranze e la nostra gloria, il sostituirle che facessimo all'opera di Dio, un'opera tutta

bensì perchè le grazie più elette di Dio sogliono manifestarsi ed operare più liberamente nelle anime fervide e pure, — abbiain di qui un motivo di più da vegliare gelosamente sopra l'innocenza di tutti i nostri scolari, da alimentarne le deboli virtù, da esercitarli a procedere ne' loro atti con mire degne del cristiano. — Ma ha egli impegno più onesto? v' ha principio di educazione che più convenga di questo all' universale? v' ha avviamento di questo più sicuro e più felice a qualsiasi carriera della vita?

Che se ad alcun giovane nasce il pensiero di rendersi religioso, e più, se intende di entrare fra noi, qual altro ufficio ci può convenire come a cristiani, a sacerdoti, ad istitutori, se non aiutare quell' anima al discernimento? Ora differendo la liberazione ad età abbastanza matura? Ora esponendo gli obblighi, le difficoltà e i vantaggi de' diversi stati? Ora dissipando i falsi giudizi o timori dettati da qualche nascosta passione? E intanto sempre avvalorando le virtù, e la fede, sicchè il giovane col farsi adulto, e più degno di Dio, giunga a meglio conoscere, e a risolvere liberamente, ciò che Dio domandi da lui? No, certo non potremo mai approvare crudeltà, e quasi direi, l'empietà di quei parenti, i quali a certificare se sia buona da Dio la vocazione de' loro figliuoli alla vita religiosa, prendono a distoglierli strapparli da tutto ciò che possa alimentare il loro affetto alle cose sante, e li lanciano, se non in mezzo ai cimenti più pericolosi per una virtù giovanile, certo fra distrazioni più efficaci a togliere l'uso del riflettere da savii. — Ma se questi infelici educatori non sanno come meglio ovviare al pericolo d' una vocazione illusoria, parmi, teniamo la vera via di mezzo, quando rispettando e volendo promuovere al principio di grazia, un' opera, che sarebbe tutta di Dio, procacciamo che per ravvisarla, e condurla a termine l' uomo si faccia più virtuoso, più riflessivo, quanto basta a poter dire da sè, e per principii certi di fede, *vedo e voglio*.

Se non che sant' Ignazio ci impose un freno anche più stretto, cui certo non persona si discreta al mondo che nell' andirlo, non abbia a confessare che la disassuefazione e la delicatezza gesuitica giunge, in questa parte almeno, più oltre a ciò che se ne esigesse.

Non basta infatti ai superiori della Compagnia lo sconsigliare i maestri dal trattare di vocazione religiosa co' loro scolari, — non basta lo scorgere che il candidato della Compagnia sia fornito di doti sufficienti a questa professione, ed esprima una risoluzione ferma e libera di perseverarvi — non basta, che i suoi parenti vi abbiano acconsentito — si ricercano gli intimi motivi, e le vie per cui sia giunto a volersi Gesuita — gli si fanno ripigliar da capo le considerazioni del pro e del contra, ma finalmente conforme parrebbe essere stato più soggetto all' influenza dell' educazione de' nostri collegii, o del consiglio e dell' amicizia di qualche nostro religioso, corchè quest' influenza non abbia punto di riprovevole, sant' Ignazio raccomanda che prima di ammetterlo fra i novizi, gli si dia tanto maggior campo a considerare ogni cosa da sè, e a deliberare per suo proprio arbitrio (*Const. Exam. Gen. c. 14.*)

Ecco dunque, o Gioberti, se è luogo ai parenti di sgomentarsi di quel *pericolosissimo imperio sulle volontà*, per cui i Gesuiti *informano i loro allievi ad anteporre la Compagnia alla famiglia*.

L' anteporre il servizio di Dio e della Chiesa a quello della famiglia, non è certo meno lodevole, quando concorrano le debite condizioni, di quello che domandano talora il solo amor di patria.

Anche col dar l' addio ad un padre, ad una madre, ai fratelli, alla casa, non si *toglie*, non si *cancella dal cuore* del religioso, il debito, l' affetto specialissimo che lo stringe verso ciascuu di loro, — la perfezione Evangelica non mira a soffocare

Nè il farsi Gesuita è un anteporre l'autorità, o le carezze de' Gesuiti all'autorità o all'affetto de' parenti, sì un arrolarsi in compagnia di que' religiosi antepoñendo Chiesa alla famiglia, Dio ad ogni cosa.

Il che ha un così altro aspetto di giustizia e di santità, che non è sapienza di Botta, o d'altri, che possa notarvi abuso, o farne argomento di beffe.

Non basta pure finalmente che un giovane ciò sappia volere liberamente, non finchè giace sotto la patria potestà, o sotto l'altrui tutela, non si permette la Compagnia di accettarlo senza il consentimento de' parenti, o di chi fa le loro veci, che dunque in ciò da riprendere onde un filosofo, un padre, una madre di famiglia abbiano a maledire i Gesuiti?

Dov'è qui ombra di *abbiezione* o di *servitù* per occhi cristiani? — O che apparenza d'*imperio*, o di artificio onde la Compagnia si dica rea di crearsi uomini ubbidienti e devoti a danno della natura o del comune?

Ma non la vediamo tutto dì in opera nelle scuole e ne' convitti a coltivare i proprii figli, e ogni affidati alle sue cure per restituirli alle famiglie ed alla patria informati ad ogni dovere?

E l'amor de' parenti, il desiderio di consolarli, il timore di dar loro disgusto, di meritare il loro sdegno, l'ambizione di comparir loro davanti con una decorazione, o con buona testimonianza de' maestri, non è come la seconda molla, direi la seconda religione, che nei convitti principalmente si mette in opera per promuovere diligenza allo studio, l'impegno ad ogni virtù, a cura più attenta e squisita di ogni pregio, onde gli occhi paterni possano voler ornato un giovanetto?

E non è perpetuo e regolare il corrispondere de' Superiori e degli alunni co' parenti di questi, per metter loro davanti il quadro de' progressi ottenuti o falliti, quasi tenendo l'autorità paterna associata sempre, ed in attivo esercizio con l'autorità de' precettori, affinchè e mantenga quella il suo impero, e sia sempre presente ai giovani, sorvegli i frutti, e serbi viva e sicura la speranza di raccogliarli, con tanta maggior soddisfazione, quanto più meritali con le sue sollecitudini?

Solo piacesse a Dio, che tutti i parenti volessero, e sapessero giovare di questa parte, ed Egli e noi loro lasciamo nell'educazione de' figli, ancor raccolti ne' nostri convitti!

Ma mentre parecchi paiono talvolta sgravarsi d'ogni debito verso i loro figliuoli coll'affidarli a scelti istitutori — mentre alcuni non han pensiero del come debbano avvalorare dal loro canto, o agevolare il gran precetto, che impone ai figli di amarli, e di rispettarli, tutti almeno fossero abbastanza studiosi a secondare con cristiano discernimento l'opera della prima istituzione, quando tornati loro i figli tra le braccia, loro resta ad introdurli più oltre nella vita.

Sempre pur ci rimarrebbe a deplorare in gran parte perdute le nostre cure intorno a certe tempre infelici d'ingegno o di cuore, cui sarebbe per avventura giovalo meglio un'educazione privata e speciale, che non il sistema d'alcun convitto.

Oltre agli inetti, agli indocili, ai pigri, dai quali non sarà mai, che alcun ministero di educazione raccolga un frutto per ogni parte soddisfacente, sempre ci resterebbe a vedere con infinito dolore, fra i molti di più felice riuscita, qualche giovane di spirito leggero e vano, gettarsi da sè, ad onta della cura paterna, per la via perversa e rovinosa.

Sempre infine qualunque riesca il frutto delle nostre fatiche, la brama di giover al meglio, ci spronerebbe a raddoppiare l'impegno, a perfezionare i metodi, a emulare a pro de' giovani la sollecitudine di chi più sappia amarli.

Ma niuna fatica, niun contrasto, niuna emulazione, che vada congiunta coi nostri



o non curanti del loro debito, presumendo compita l'educazione coi primi corsi del collegio, non hanno proseguito a sorvegliare, a dirigere, a correggere i figli sperti.

Non è bontà di istituzione, che prometta di avvalorare un giovanetto sì, che pena adulto si possa regger da sè, o gettato senza riguardo in certe occasioni a salvare la sua fede o la sua innocenza.

— Ma per quanto gli istitutori siano stati intesi a farlo robusto, amante di vita laboriosa e degna, e ornatolo di quella scienza, che le sue facoltà portavano, i suoi genitori voglion quindi vederlo a lor utile e decoro fatto virtuoso cittadino: essi devono con una seconda maniera di educazione guidarlo ad applicare fra i suoi doveri della sua età, quella che fin allora non potè essere più che saviezza da ciullo.

Per questa considerazione mi vieterò io qui la compiacenza, sì onesta tutt'al più, con cui potrei ritessere il lungo catalogo degli uomini illustri in ogni genere di virtù, in seno ai quali la Compagnia ricorda d'aver piantato i primi germi di virtù e di sapere.

Io voglio riconoscere, che S. Francesco di Sales, S. Alfonso de' Liguori, e altri personaggi venerati per fama di santità quel nobilissimo Arcivescovo Dénou, che lasciò alla Francia tal desiderio di sè, non punto a noi son debitori della corona, ma questo è merito dell'aver essi saputo e voluto render fruttuose le semenze di pietà e di dottrina piantate loro in seno dagli istitutori che incontrarono nella Compagnia. — Tanto meno al ricordare, fra gli alunni di lei divenuti suoi padri e tutori, un Gregorio XV, un Clemente, IX, un Innocenzo XII, Clemente XII, o gli Albani, i Doria, gli Orsi, i Mattei, i Quirini, le darò vanto per l'eminente grandezza, alla quale in uscire de' suoi collegii la nascita, l'ingegno, la virtù, la divina provvidenza li trovarono avviati. Muratori e Cassini, Vico, Descartes, Tasso, Goldoni, Chiabrera, Bossuet, Fleury, Scipione Maffei, e cento altri non meno superiori a molti loro contemporanei o nella condotta degli esercizi de' pubblici affari, nella sapienza del magistrato, o nelle virtù pastorali, furon sì degni di, non perchè noi li abbiamo fatti, ma perchè avendo sortito da natura facoltà nobili e l'educazione de' nostri collegii direttala ad acconcio sviluppo, la loro forza li fe' perseverare nel primo indirizzo e vincere più o meno felicemente i trasti.

Della scienza, della virtù di costoro, e di tanti altri uomini probi, utili, esemplari, che non lasciaron nome da illustrare le nostre scuole, ma ne produssero molti frutti in seno alle private famiglie ed a servizio della patria o della Chiesa, riparta pure la lode tra quanti l'esige il buon diritto, — e a noi non tocchi che misurata a quel tanto, che l'educazione potè lor conferire di buona dottrina e di saviezza.

Ma appunto perchè l'opera nostra non può, nè dee fornire il tutto che si vuole all'essere di ottimi cittadini, di cristiani generosi, di chierici intemerati, d'uomini famosi di fama per lettere, per scienza, per valor di opere, siami permesso di protestare contro chi esige la perfetta riuscita de' nostri scolari, o ci rimproveri di fallire per difetto di aiuti de' lor parenti, finchè una maggior armonia di principii intorno all'istruzione, all'educazione, un maggior consenso delle menti intorno alle dottrine cattoliche e ai bisogni della repubblica, non venga a stabilire una maggior corrispondenza fra la scuola e la famiglia, tra gli istitutori ed i genitori, tra l'avviamento voluto all'infanzia e gli esercizi e le idee e le ambizioni proposte all'adolescenza. — A liberare però questo concerto di mire e di sforzi, non occorre prima, che la Com-

mezzi di educare una nuova generazione di cristiani, degna così del cielo, come alla  
ai doveri sociali (1).

Questo concerto io lo spero, e ne ho in pegno, prima il buon senso delle nazioni cattoliche, stanche oramai di tanti sistemi di educazione inventati a sviarle più o meno dal piissimo magistero della Chiesa, sola a possedere quella sapienza educatrice, che misura il vero ad ogni grado di intelligenza, e lo formola in un linguaggio infallibile ed efficace, e con una sola dottrina, con una sola carità pianta e prepara tutte le virtù private, domestiche e civili.

Ma un altro pegno me lo porge il fatto. — Si vogliano screditare i convitti diretti da' religiosi, e più i nostri; — e frattanto le nazioni, che hanno più esperienza, e sanno oramai, che cosa suoni un certo parlare di gesuitismo e di civiltà, offrono l'esempio di una fiducia sempre crescente verso i convitti di Friburgo, di Brugelette, di Tournay, e gli altri così di Svizzera, come del Belgio, i quali raccogliendo giovani di ogni parte d'Europa e del mondo, fin dall'America già non solo vanno oltre quanto l'antica Compagnia abbia mai raggiunto di gloria in questo genere, ma non meno sono sufficienti. — L'Italia stessa, la quale abbonda di case di educazione tutte degne della fiducia de' buoni padri di famiglia, ne apre ancora delle nuove in parecchie città alla Compagnia. Donde argomento, non già in favore della Compagnia, ma che quale non vuole esser sola maestra, ma per attestare il progresso, che fa presso le nazioni cristiane il concetto dell'educazione secondo le idee religiose.

(1) Quanto agli antichi convitti la storia non poco ci favorisce, e restano tuttora (a dispetto anche solo dell'Italia) le memorie dei convitti romano, germanico, Tolomei di Siena, Farnesiani di Parma, che educarono tanta gioventù italiana ed estera, fiore di nobiltà e gentilezza pel corso di quasi due secoli, e se ne hanno alla luce i cataloghi dei nomi illustri, che possono far fede a chi ne dubitasse. Carlo Emanuele di Savoia vedendo un sì gran bene, non volle che più a lungo la sua Torino ne fosse priva, e scrisse al Generale di allora in Roma per la fondazione del Real Collegio di Savoia de' Nobili, e l'ottenne. Abbiamo nell'archivio copia di quella lettera, che qui volentieri pubblichiamo.

*Rev.<sup>mo</sup> Padre*

Essendo l'educazione della Nobiltà fondamento di ogni buon governo, ed il sostegno principale d'ogni gran Corona, riconoscendo in questi miei Stati gran copia di Cavalieri ben nati, ho pensato dar loro il miglior aiuto possibile col pregare V. P. R.<sup>ma</sup> a volere permettere, che a similitudine d'altre Città, che ne provano gran beneficio, s'erga in questa di Torino un Collegio de' Nobili, assistito da' PP. della Compagnia, acciò sotto tal direzione, imparando insieme la pietà, lettere, e buoni costumi, vengano a riuscire ottimi soggetti, e ministri per ogni impiego, che si possa loro commettere, assicurando la P. V. R.<sup>ma</sup>, che siccome d.<sup>a</sup> Religione e d.<sup>a</sup> sua particolar Persona mi professo affettionato, così di questo nascente luogo, e de' PP. che lo assisteranno sarò sempre particolar Protettore, e confidando, che il gran zelo di V. P. R.<sup>ma</sup> sarà per concorrere a questa mia istanza, le auguro dal Signore ogni bene.

Torino 22 Luglio 1666.

Ai piaceri di V. P. R.<sup>ma</sup>

*Il Duca di Savoia Re di Cipro et  
C. EMANUEL*

*Al P. Generale della Compagnia di Gesù.*

pagnia promosse i buoni studii, in quanto la verità di questo fatto, al quale sembri aver posto mente, importa alla verità delle tue conclusioni.

Un quadro più ampio de' lavori letterarii, scientifici, e d' ogni varia utilità intrapresi, sostenuti dalla Compagnia in tutto il corso della sua esistenza, io traccio nel quarto volume della storia di quest' Ordine testè descritta rapidamente, e senza adulazione da Crétinean-Joly. — Confido che molti saranno per fermare lo sguardo, e questi lungi dall' incolparmi di esagerato ammiratore delle cose antiche, m' impuleranno per avventura d' aver sacrificato il trionfo d' una causa alla modestia eccessiva.

Discorrevamo poco sopra delle scuole di preliminare educazione; aggiungerò ora le Università coi corsi intieri di filosofia e d' ogni scienza sacra.

Questa sorta di stabilimenti, non furono tra le mani della Compagnia, nè per monopolio, nè per profitto; ma investita fin dal nascere per apostolica autorità del diritto di giovare con l' istruzione alla Chiesa universale; il suo essere fu ad un tempo e di banditrice del Vangelo ad ogni genere di uomini, e di istitutrice della gioventù in ogni disciplina.

Il diritto e lo scopo dell' Istituto eran d' accordo con la sua propria natura. L' educazione del Gesuita era diretta precisamente all' apostolato per via delle scienze e delle lettere. — Il giovane religioso dovea per istituto formarsi per lunghi anni nelle scuole, e per le scuole. L' insegnar dalla cattedra era il primo apostolato riservato alla sua età, ed un secondo modo di studio, con che avvalorarsi ai ministeri sacerdotali.

La creazione di un siffatto Ordine, che la Chiesa riguardò come opera di cui non potea dunque trovarsi oziosa e inopportuna.

Alla missione, che la Compagnia riceveva dalla santa Sede per le scuole, aggiunse la fiducia, il desiderio di molta parte della Chiesa universale. — I Principi e i Comuni sollecitarono la Compagnia ad accettare i loro collegii; e in breve tempo essa fu posta in pieno esercizio dell' insegnamento pubblico negli stati d' Europa più esposti all' invasione dell' eresia (1).

Ma l' affidare l' insegnamento alla Compagnia, non fu un distruggere le istituzioni già esistenti. Essa non veniva ad invadere le cattedre, sì a propagare col suo corso ogni sapere. — Così intendeva essa la sua vocazione — e così l' intesero i Principi e i Comuni. I suoi collegii furono un mezzo di più, che le città cristiane presero a fornire all' istituzione letteraria e scientifica de' giovani, affinchè in maggior numero vi partecipassero, e ne cogliessero più agevolmente i frutti. — Nella qual mira la Compagnia volle sempre che le sue scuole fossero gratuite; e oltre agli scolari impegnati veramente alle sue lezioni, agli esami, alla disciplina stabilita, essa amò di largir quanto il buon ordine il consente, libero l' accesso agli uditori che volessero frequentare qualsiasi classe.

L' insegnamento della Compagnia, qualunque fosse il suo pregio intrinseco, relativo, chè ne discorreremo fra breve, fu adunque in prima una qualsiasi moltiplicazione e diffusione di quel tanto di luce, che al sorgere di lei splendeva nel mondo cattolico.

Non avesse pur fatto altro fuorchè eccitare l' emulazione de' collegii e

(1) In Italia ebbe anticamente la Compagnia almeno sei Università, dal Pontefice la Romana, dal Duca Ranuzio la Parmense, dai Gonzaga la Mantovana, da S. Carlo la milanese, da Brera, la Genovese dalla Serenissima, e la Sassaritana da que' cittadini.

perosa.

E non avesse pur saputo altro fuorchè diffonder gli studii elementari di grammatica o di letteratura, quel primo dirozzamento operato a favore d'un maggior numero di fanciulli d'ogni condizione in mezzo alle città d'Europa, avrebbe pur preparato qualche generazione di cittadini più colti, più industriosi, più utili alla patria.

Ma la storia ricorda alquanto migliori frutti. E se le memorie che restano degli uomini di que' tempi intesero di misurarsi con la nuova rivalità, non sono in tutto onorevoli alla lor classe, stiamo solo a considerare fuori del teatro delle umane passioni ciò, che sia avvenuto nel campo delle lettere e delle scienze.

La Compagnia di Gesù si sostenne essa degnamente a quel grado di coltura di sapere, ch'era de' letterati suoi contemporanei?

Ha essa giovato con le sue scuole a spandere fra le nazioni cattoliche ogni utile studio?

Prima di levarsi al pari degli uomini illustri di qualsiasi età, la Compagnia non vuol lasciare di riconoscere, che se i suoi proprii padri, ebbero alcun valore nelle scienze sacre o profane, di queste loro fu principale maestra l'Università di Parigi.

Nè certamente in sì breve giro d'anni quanti ne corsero dal suo primo costituirsi fino alla morte del suo fondatore, potè essa moltiplicarsi tanto da avviare quarantanove collegii, se non perchè i molti venuti ad arrolarsi sotto la sua regola, erano usciti con non mediocre suppellettile di dottrina delle varie scuole d'Europa.

Ma pagato questo tributo di gratitudine e di giustizia ai suoi primi maestri, non piglia a ragion vuole che rivolgendosi ai nuovi giudici, i quali si facciano a domandarle conto de' suoi sforzi, e de' suoi successi nella carriera degli studii, li preghi di non prenderne la misura dalla perfezione cui sia giunta la coltura presente; ma avendo riguardo ai mezzi e all'indole de' tempi passati vadano raffrontando il merito di lei con quello di chi correndo pel medesimo stadio, poteva contenderle la palma.

Io osservo intanto, che non solo i suoi collegii si popolavano di scolari, e si moltiplicavano per ogni dove correndo la fama dell'utile servizio, che via via avevano raccolto i varii Stati, ma essa medesima dopo seguito per alcun tempo il comune andamento delle altre scuole, e riconosciuto per esperienza il bisogno di un ordine più soddisfacente, e maggiori soccorsi alle menti giovanili, si diede con efficace consiglio a due sorta di imprese; le quali per loro sole, e pel grado di perfezione, cui furon condotte, ci danno onde apprezzare l'impegno, l'abilità, il successo, con cui non cessò di attendere alla pubblica educazione letteraria e scientifica.

### 1.<sup>o</sup> RATIO STUDIORUM.

La prima di coteste imprese, ch'io voglio qui menzionare è l'ordinamento e il metodo degli studii — la redazione cioè di quel codice particolare delle scuole della Compagnia, detto *Ratio studiorum*.

Già le costituzioni di sant'Ignazio aveano poste alcune basi uniformi a tutti i collegii del suo Ordine.

Ma egli lasciò intorno a questa, come a ciascun'altra parte dell'Istituto, che la Compagnia procedesse a determinarsi regole più precise, quando l'esperienza la potesse meglio guidare nella stima de' proprii doveri, e de' mezzi acconci al fine.

Ora in meno di venticinque anni dalla fondazione la Compagnia era giunta a numerare oltre a cento stabilimenti di studii. Le circostanze così diverse, in cui essa avea fatto i primi saggi di questo ministero in Germania, in Italia, in Ispagna, in Portogallo già le aveano acquistato un'esperienza da uguagliare quella di molti

Congregazione generale mirò ad assicurare in seno alla Compagnia medesima l'educazione di valenti allievi, i quali potessero succedere degnamente ai maestri già trati al pòssesso delle cattedre. Intanto gli uomini più intenti per ufficio ad osservare l'andamento delle scuole fermavano viemeglio i loro concetti intorno alle occorrenze delle riforme. Finchè radunatasi la Compagnia nuovamente in Congregazione generale, fu affidata al P. Aquaviva la cura di procedere al comune ordinamento degli studii d'ogni classe, egli raccolse per questo lavoro sette Padri (1) tra i più letterati e pratici degli usi e de' bisogni di ciascuna delle principali provincie d'Europa. L'opera seguente il codice da loro messo in ordine, fu affidato ad una seconda commissione composta di altri dodici Padri di diverse nazioni, ed esercitati così nelle cattedre, e nel governo della gioventù. — Onde trent'anni incirca dopo la morte di sant'Ignazio la Compagnia ebbe intieramente compilata, sancita e messa in pratica la sua sì celebre legislazione in fatto di studii.

L'esperienza de' tempi che seguirono la pubblicazione del *Ratio studiorum* condusse, che a doverne confermare le regole. La serie degli studii gramaticali, letterarii e filosofici parve non che conforme all'andamento comune allora di tutte le scuole, ma ancora al progressivo sviluppo delle facoltà mentali.

Le materie eran distribuite per modo, che il corso d'un anno facesse gradatamente l'altro senza lasciar lacune, o alcun campo all'ozio, nè tuttavia opprimere talmente lo scolaro da non lasciargli tempo di rivedere le cose apprese, ad esercitare lo studio e attendere alla lettura de' modelli.

E in tanto che questa distribuzione di studii forniva ai più, che sono sempre mediocri, l'agio di tornare due volte nell'anno sopra i medesimi precetti, consentiva ai più ingegnosi e diligenti di poter essere promossi a mezzo l'anno alla classe superiore.

L'emulazione era provocata e sostenuta con varie industrie, secondo che era l'indole de' fanciulli e la varia condizione degli studii proprii all'età puerile e all'età adulta.

Ogni cautela fu stabilita pel buon costume e per lo adempimento dei doveri cristiani. Poche però le pratiche esteriori, bensì accurata l'istruzione religiosa e la direzione degli affetti.

Fra il tanto dire, che si ode dell'avversione de' Gesuiti per ogni ingenua curiosità dell'animo, è ammirabile il vedere in quel lor codice di educazione, la schiettezza di tutta la Compagnia nell'efficacia propria de' buoni studii, per imprimere nell'anima l'idea del bello letterario ogni senso virtuoso.

Niun tesoro della classica antichità è sottratto alle mani o agli occhi degli scolari; tutto anzi è distribuito e sollecitato il corso degli studii gramaticali, per cui mano in mano introducano a trattare famigliarmente con Omero e Virgilio, con Aristotele e con Cicerone, e con tutti i sommi maestri del dire.

Veramente quegli studii avvalorati dall'esercizio delle versioni, e del commento, miravano ad addestrare il giovane a maneggiare le lingue antiche.

Or si può dubitare se non giovi meglio condurlo solo all'intelligenza di quanto tanto che giunga ad imitare gli antichi nella lingua sua propria. — Ma qual sia il rispettivo vantaggio dell'uno o dell'altro sistema, certo quello che la Compagnia s'impose a que' tempi rispondeva allo scopo, che giusta l'universale consuetudine era a volersi ne' corsi letterarii, e risponde ancora oggidì se non al voto della maggioranza dei cittadini, al giudizio di molti dotti. — Ad ogni modo il sistema sistematico della Compagnia non sarebbe stato amico dell'ozio o della barbarie. E per

(1) Uno di questi era il celebre Maldonato.



religiosi dedicati all' insegnamento ) nè le lettere e le scuole sono altro tra le mani di lei, fuorchè un mezzo di apostolato da dirigersi al miglior servizio della Chiesa cattolica, non potrà mai essere accusata di aver fatto violenza all' andamento degli studii per aver seguito d' accordo con la Chiesa istessa, quello fra i metodi, che più conduce al culto dell' antichità, e de' modelli universali — quello, che fornisce alla diffusione del sapere un linguaggio invariabile, sacro e comune già a tutte le nazioni colte, — quello infine che è proprio dell' eminente letteratura.

In questo secolo dove la questione fra i due sistemi è posta più o men nettamente, e sollecita in pratica una qualsiasi soluzione, la Compagnia attende in primo ad osservare i frutti della propria e dell' altrui esperienza ; e quasi disponendosi a prendere, se occorra, una nuova direzione già si provò a modificare il suo *Ratio studiorum* in quelle parti, dove senza rovinare l' antico sistema era possibile il dar maggior luogo allo studio delle lingue moderne e a varie discipline di uso immediato nella vita. — Nè vedo che il fatto da lei ne' secoli addietro ci impegni a dove disperare di ciò che essa varrà in avvenire.

Già il fatto di tre secoli ce la mostra amante sincera degli studii, giusta il loro concetto più ampio, e più elevato. Già ce la mostra sollecita di ordinarne e d' agevolarne il corso al maggior numero di giovani, che fosse possibile, già la vediamo con indefessa attività e diligenza attendere a formare i maestri, ed esigere l' adempimento delle regole prescritte, e con quelle fornire al santuario, al foro, alle accademie, ad ogni ordine della repubblica parecchie generazioni d' uomini degni ancora della memoria de' posteri — e vorrem dire, che costituita pure e diretta com' è per apostolica missione a giovare alla Chiesa in tutte le nuove occorrenze, o non debba scorgere in che le occorrenze attuali esigano diverso procedere, o l' usato procedere del suo insegnamento non possa più altro fuorchè esser funesto ?

Comunque altri ne vada congetturando, tu puoi aver veduto, come il passato dovesse in questa parte fornir argomento alle speranze o ai timori intorno all' avvenire, e mentre ti parve bene di aggravare i motivi di diffidenza col recare in mezzo quanti torli veri od apparenti si possano imputare alla Compagnia per altri rispetti più o meno attinenti all' educazione, ti piacque di tacere quanto abbia operato appunto in ordine alle lettere ed alle scienze.

Ma non puoi illudere coloro, che vogliano entrare seriamente in siffatta questione. — Il fatto dell' antico *Ratio studiorum*, il fatto delle modificazioni fatte per saggio nel nuovo, il fatto dell' attendere che fa la Compagnia *ex professo* a sostenere la parte più nobile della coltura letteraria, non può essere ignorato o avuto per nullo.

O forse che non ignorato al tutto questo codice parve a taluno dover essere niente più, che una rabbineria, fabbricata apposta per inceppare e maestri e discepoli, con rubriche di pedantismo, e di materiale disciplina ?

Altri il direbbe per avventura di qualsiasi codice dove lasciate in disparte le teorie e le discussioni, si pronunziano i soli ordinamenti a seguirsi in pratica. Ma una mente pari alla tua sa penetrare sotto la scorza del precetto il principio donde discende, e arguire dalla direzione dell' atto esteriore quale sia per esserne la conseguenza negli ordini morali.

Di più è da por mente, che al Codice scritto va congiunta l' autorità viva, che lo interpreta e lo applica e ne dirige l' esecuzione con la mira al fine, e coi debiti riguardi alle circostanze. — Quest' autorità è ripartita tra il Prefetto ed il Rettore di ciascun collegio, e il Superiore di tutti i collegii d' una Provincia. — Ed è naturale a seguirne, che ove solo il Provinciale, il Rettore, il Prefetto delle scuole non siano ostinati a mettere i maestri alla tortura, e ad immolare a dispetto dello spirito pub-

scuole.

Lo spirito poi del *Ratio studiorum*, che sarebbe a dire la parte del Prefetto condurre i maestri, e nell'animare con essi il fervore delle scuole, non è pur cosa nota sì arcana, o sì libera all'umore di ciascheduno; che tu non ne possa giudicare ed esserne pago. — Fra i varii scritti che la Compagnia porge in mano ai maestri a chi li dirige, bastimi citare l'opuscolo del Jouvency, che ha per titolo *Ratio scendi et docendi*, fatto degno che dalle mani della Compagnia passasse in quelle delle Università e de' loro Professori.

Finalmente, se io rinunziava testè, a ricordare come frutto delle nostre scuole quello splendore che diedero nel mondo letterario molti di coloro, che in esse attinsero gli elementi del sapere, valgami ciò stesso a cogliere tanto miglior argomento di lode de' loro maestri dall'amicizia, e dalla gratitudine, che per essi serbarono.

Bossuet, Fleury, Corneille, Descartes, benchè avesse nella Compagnia degli oppositori, lo stesso Voltaire, onorarono i Gesuiti loro maestri di spontanee e pubbliche testimonianze di stima. Il Tasso mantenne al suo P. Francesco Guerrieri un affetto costante, di cui volle perpetuare la memoria ne' suoi versi. Galileo ancora fra le sue sventure si consolava coll'amicizia di alcuni Gesuiti, fra i quali, scriveva, gli fu dato di trovare chi lo intendesse (1). E se prendi in mano le corrispondenze stampate di parecchi altri, le dediche reciproche di opere tra gli illustri discepoli e gli altri professori, i giudizi esposti qua e là da tanti scrittori, già nostri allievi, intorno al metodo sotto il quale si eran formati, o intorno al merito degli istitutori avuti in questi ne' corsi letterarii, potresti raccoglierne troppo più magnifiche cose, che la modestia e il tempo non mi consente di ricopiare in questo luogo.

Anche fra coloro, che non frequentarono le nostre scuole sono uomini anche de' buoni studii, i quali le celebrano per eccellenti, e ne danno per cagione l'efficacia del *Ratio studiorum*. Son noti i giudizi raccolti altre volte da Bacone, Grozio, da Richelieu (2), Robertson, Dallas, ec. Ma quando si prende a giudicare d'un sistema di leggi più per principii, o per autorità che non per averne portato il peso, e sperimentato da sè medesimo i vantaggi o i danni, i giudizi possono variare, secondo i varii rispetti, sotto cui piace ad ognuno di considerarlo. — Così gli elogi, che altri cita in nostro favore si potrebbero opporre se non le contumelie, i fisimi e le menzogne di alcuni antichi, o recenti commentatori del nostro istituto. Il giudizio troppo più grave di Leibnizio, il quale non pensava in questo punto come noi, e credeva le scuole de' Gesuiti assai migliorabili. — Io mi astengo adunque da quella sorta di argomento, che si termina al valore di opinioni individuali, senza appoggio della propria esperienza.

Le testimonianze, che ho menzionate sono di giudici esperti, e superiori ad ogni spirito di fazione gesuitica. — E ove anche queste fossero contraddette da alcuni, l'esperienza avesse provato, non tutti i maestri de' nostri collegii meritare la gratitudine, o la stima de' loro scolari, giusti però come vogliono essere, consentiranno a noi, che tolta in mano la legislazione delle scuole nostre, da quell'istesso *Ratio studiorum*, che condannerebbe il maestro se gli avvenne di discostarsene, si dedurrebbe la lode della Compagnia, la quale gli avea pur dato un Codice la cui esecuzione costò a fare tanti altri istitutori e discepoli, i cui nomi si partecipano a vicenda gloria.

(1) I PP. Clavio, Guldin, Grierbenger. ec.

(2) Il Beato Barbarigo Cardinale fondando il celebratissimo seminario di Padova dal *Ratio studiorum* qual è per legge da seguirvisi in ogni disciplina, e non ebbe né egli a discostarsene, né altri a basimarne i frutti.

la da chi guarda ai fatti ; e fu il fornire e moltiplicare in favore d' ogni ramo di letteratura e di scienze opere elementari, degni modelli, mezzi di vario genere ad agvolarne la coltura.

## 2.° LAVORI CLASSICI, IMPRESE SCIENTIFICHE EC.

Gramatiche, Lessici, Antologie latine e greche furon opera non indegna di molti dotti. Il singolare trattato del Torsellini *de Particulis* porge da sè un saggio del valore e dell' impegno di molti altri consacratisi a questo genere di studi. E se mi è lecito qui di uscire del cerchio delle scuole per accennare un servizio immenso reso dalla Compagnia alla civiltà con gli studi filologici, posso dire in una parola che i suoi orientalisti e i suoi Missionarii, giunti a ridurre a regola o a diffondere maggiormente tante lingue diverse, ampliarono di non poco la via al commercio delle idee tra i popoli de' due emisferi, e tra le presenti generazioni e le passate.

Ma perchè fra i lavori tributati dai nostri alla repubblica letteraria non farò anche menzione de' Poemi, de' Drammi, delle Prose d' ogni forma, che la loro età accoglie se pur con applauso ? Il soggetto preso in alcuni di questi componimenti ad abbellire non regge al certo per il peso al torrente di troppe altre idee, che un secolo più attivo e filosofo ci reca ora a discutere. Ma non eran pur uomini leggeri od oziosi quelli che ci lasciarono que' pochi scherzi; e quegli scherzi elegantissimi per lo più ed ingegnosi non furon indegni d' essere stampati dall' Olivet e riprodotti non senza guari e ben accolti in Parigi. Chi ci vieterà di sorridere all' idea d' un Poemetto in lode del cioccolato ? Non ti era però permesso di darlo per altro da quello ch' esso era. Questa *galantissima poesia*, questo *gentile scherzo scritto con nobiltà e proprietà di versi latini* dal P. Tommaso Strozzi napolitano *gran teologo e predicatore*, non era punto destinato a sviare l' Italia o il Mondo da più gravi studii , ma concessa per amicizia alle mani del Redi, questi, che così ne parla , *credè di far cosa grata ai lettori* di pubblicarlo nelle annotazioni al ditirambo. E tu ne fai un avvenimento fatale ? Che sarà dunque ove io aggiunga , che anche il Forzoni accademico del Crusca, volle scrivere versi latini sul cioccolato ? Che il Lorenzini si piacque di cantare la famosa bevanda in un ditirambo italiano ? È probabile però che il Gesuita abbia il torto d' essersi fatto leggere con maggior gusto. — E se tanto è, io mi taccio.

Se non che l' esempio del cantare oggetti scherzevoli, scene campestri e giuochi ed arti e tutte cose usuali era tolto dagli antichi, e i nostri maestri di latinità ne prevalevano appunto per porgere ai giovani sotto forma dilettevole i tesori più ricchi conditi della classica favella.

Aspirarono anche più alto il Brumoy, il Ceva, il Mazzolari, il Sevastano, il Gianetazzi prendendo a descrivere in versi latini ogni sorta di fenomeni fisici ; nè cercarono di rimasero inferiori ai loro primi modelli, nè così ardua impresa fu loro ispirata dall' amore dell' ozio. No veramente il P. Boscovich, non era già un Arcade sfaccendato e lezioso, nè il suo Poema *de Defectibus solis et lunae* — fu punto indegno di comparire sotto gli auspicii dell' Accademia di Londra, di cui l' autore era socio. I celebri Mairan e Montucla lodan pure i poemetti del P. Noceti *de Iride, e de Aurora Boreali*, ristampati a que' dì in Parigi, cui il medesimo Boscovich avea corredato di note (1).

(1) Anche i poemetti di morale argomento e squisitamente latini del P. Grimaldi ebbero più d' una volta l' onore di una stampa parigina, V. *Poemata didascalica* vol. 3, circa il 1810.



maigrado i suoi dritti per precursore di Milton. E dal P. Federico Spee avestimo le dolcissime odi testè ristampate in Berlino, che, siccome porta il loro titolo in tedesco, sono una *disfida all' usignuolo*.

Ma per tornare alle Georgiche od agli scherzi poetici, il *Praedium Rusticum* del P. Vanière, e gli *Horti* del Rapisarda non sono stimati nel mondo letterario per opera di buoni maestri? O non sono graziosi sempre e di buon gusto i *Lusus Allectori* del P. Sautel, e le *fabulae* del Desbillons?

Mi pare, che l'Istituto della Compagnia richiedendo valenti professori, per i quali che grandi poeti, le opere classiche de' nostri latinisti guarentiscono oltre al bisogno il merito, che in loro si ricerca. E dato solo, che la classica letteratura sia un monumento pregevole di civiltà, e determinato il grado di civiltà, in cui ciascuno di questi letterati dovea esercitare la sua influenza, sarebbe agevole il decidere se quella istituzione, la quale formò nel suo seno tali Latinisti o Grecisti, tali cultori d'ogni genere del dire, quali furono i sopracitati, e oltre ad essi il Maffei, il Sacchini, il La Rocco, il Lagomarsini, il Lanzi, il Perpignano, il Cunich, il Cordara, il Zamagna, il Meloni, Guido Ferrari ecc. promettesse abbastanza buone guide e buone scuole.

Ma qualunque sia il pregio delle loro produzioni, (chè sei pur libero d'averle al presente per poco o nullo) perchè ne aggravi tu il dispregio col supporre che o la Compagnia si sforzassero di *sostituirle ai monumenti immortali dell' uman ingegno*? Un bell' umore della Compagnia, tu dici, pigliò l' assunto di attender quel colosso di Dante, e mostri il Bettinelli fulminato dal Gozzi, dal Parini, dal Monti, dal Fieschi. — Ma quanto non avresti meglio avvilito quell' Apostata del culto dantesco se tra i valorosi, che ne fecero vendetta, avessi dipinto ancora parecchi Gesuiti intenti a scomunicarlo, o di rimettere in piedi le tradizioni della comune scuola?

Già il Bartoli avea chiamato il poema di Dante — *opera impareggiabile per la grandezza e la preminenza dell' ingegno e del dire* — *avvegnachè ella non sia mica puscola per ogni dente*.

Già prima il Bellarmino, *quel celebre controversista*, dice l' egregio Sig. Gennaro Nam, *che portava il peso di tutte le questioni religiose, che aveva il Papa per cliente, e dei Re, come Giacomo I., per avversarii, non aveva sdegnato creare la penna alla difesa del poeta nazionale* ( V. Bellarm. *Responsio ad bell. anonym.* dove mentre il teologo vendica l' ortodossia di Dante, l' italiano può dissimulare la sua simpatia pel patrio cantore ).

Ma ai tempi più vicini al Bettinelli, allorchè il P. Venturi concorreva tra i primi a spianare con facil commento la lettura del divino Poema ( comechè ei si sia scusato fuggir dalla penna alcuni motti pungenti intorno a questo o a quel luogo, e a quel verso ) la gioventù italiana non solo vedeva per quest' impresa alzato un monumento al Padre della nazionale letteratura, ma veniva tratta a gustare, a meditare un libro bello, cui nè pur altre scuole aveano abbastanza apprezzato (1).

Il P. Andrea Rubbi lo poneva pur allora con le debite lodi in capo alla gran Collezione del Parnaso Italiano.

Prima di questi il P. Carlo d' Aquino, ripubblicando il Poema di Dante, e dandogli di brevi annotazioni, e traducendolo in versi latini, non intendeva pur

(1) S' è detto male del commento del Venturi, ma non so se allorchè venne alla luce ( nel 1732 ) vi fosse un miglior commento letterale. Dopo la prima edizione di Lucca, dedicata a Papa Clemente XII, fu ristampato almeno sei volte nel secolo XVIII, e nel corrente è riprodotto in Lucca nel 1811, in Firenze nel 1812 e di nuovo nel 1813, in Bassano nel 1814, in Livorno nel 1817 e in Pisa nel 1819, e ultimamente in Torino colle note dello stesso editore dal Robiola.

Fin dove andasse il culto dantesco fra i Gesuiti ce lo dimostra ancora il Lanza il quale da quel tesoro universale di sapienza, che è la divina Commedia, volle estrarre singolarmente le lodi della Teologia (2).

Il P. Mazzolari conosciuto sotto i nomi di Mariano Partenio, professore a Roma e in Firenze di belle lettere, nella prima delle due orazioni squisitamente latine, appunto sopra il Primato degli Italiani, in poche parole fa un elogio dell'Alighieri, come tu, nè altri, come te, passionatissimi e giustamente del gran poeta, avreste ch'aggiungere: lo mette sopra gli altri d'Italia, allato di Omero: *ex italica vero poetarum quorum incredibilis est numerus, uti nemo Dante Aligherius antiquior, sic ille nemo praestantior: qui merito omnigenae eruditionis copia cum Homero confertur, et italicus Homerus appellatur, atque ut ab illo graecorum et latinorum ita ab hoc italorum*

*ceu fonte perenni  
Vatum pieris ora rigantur aquis.*

Così egli, e correivano que' tempi benedetti delle Lettere Virgiliane.

Il Tiraboschi, altro non men celebre professore di retorica in Brera ai giorni del Parini e del Bettinelli che nella sua *Storia della letteratura italiana* esprime le tradizioni, in che era stato nutrito, e prende a dirigere il senno della nazione, a discernere i maestri dai pedanti e dai corrompitori delle lettere, non solo innalza Dante al seggio, che gli è dovuto fra color che sanno, ma ad ogni tratto richiama ai classici modelli e ai puri principii che Dante medesimo ebbe per guida.

Possiamo perdonare ai forestieri il citare che intendono, fra i più nobili nostri letterati il Bettinelli, e fra i suoi più lodevoli parti le *Lettere virgiliane*: tu sai, che quel bell'ingegno, ancorchè dotato di sì buon gusto, da aver saputo presentire con singolar compiacenza a quanto futuro pro delle lettere italiane il dantesco Ab. Cesarini (3) lor consacrava i primi saggi della sua penna, peccò di quella mania non pur rara fra i letterati, che è vaghezza di paradossali novità. — Egli è manifesto, che quando ei si levò contro il *colosso*, questo già era grande agli occhi dell'universale, ma, come accade intorno a qualsiasi oggetto di ammirazione e di culto, un'opinione che a quel tempo pareva non meno bella di giovanile indipendenza, che ferma sopra i precetti degli antichi maestri, armò lui, e con lui pochi altri niente più Gesuiti di contro il comune sentire de' suoi colleghi, e de' suoi istitutori.

Se non che, domando io, per qual legge abbiamo noi a rispondere del buono o del malvagio gusto della buona o rea critica d'alcun nostro letterato del secolo passato?

Avresti tu dimenticato le splendide lezioni che il P. Manera diede sopra l'Alighieri nell'Ateneo di Torino, mettendolo in maraviglia ed amore della nostra giove

(1) La traduzione del P. d'Aquino è, credo, l'unica traduzione latina di Dante reputata fedele ed elegante. Esso fu il primo che chiese e ottenne in Roma licenza di pubblicare la Commedia di Dante, e così aprì la via alle belle edizioni Romane del 1791, del 1815 e del 1820.

(2) In una lettera del Sig. Luigi Grassi Bibliotecario di questa Regia Università mentovata un manoscritto del P. Giambattista Pastorini, poeta genovese non ignobile, intitolato *Bellezze Dantesche*, il che altresì fa vedere, che Dante fra noi studiavasi, molto prima che il Monti e Cesarini lo mettessero in tanto amore agli Italiani, in un secolo ancora tutto frondi e pastorelle d'Arcadia. La lettera leggesi stampata nell'erudita opera del Sig. Giuseppe Banchero *Guida alle bellezze di Genova* fascicolo 18.

(3) V. nella vita del P. Cesarini promessa all'edizione delle sue Opere la lettera del Bettinelli al Vannetti.

Ma queste lezioni, che risuonavano una volta in pubblico sono conosciute ne legii donde si indirizzano i nostri giovani religiosi alle cattedre di Umanità e di retorica. Continuo è per loro l'alternare lo studio de' grandi maestri italiani con quello de' classici latini e greci. E assicurati pure, che se dal silenzio delle lor camere uscissero alcuni di questi studenti, che avran da educare la veggente generazione dresti quante belle speranze germogliano all'Italia.

Potrei aggiungere, che parecchi Gesuiti viventi hanno pubblicato varii scritti di difesa o ad illustrazione di Dante; de' quali non si sono mostrati ignari, nè malconoscitori alcuni illustri stranieri studiosissimi del gran poeta, quali sono il Cav. Artaud, Prof. Ozanam. — Ma a mostrarti quanto poco ti stia bene, in faccia a' giovani italiani testimonii del nostro operare, il darci per gente, cui l'ombra del ghibellino *di i sonni*, rammenterò più volentieri le esercitazioni, modeste sì, ma d'ogni Corso, e d'ogni anno, in cui i nostri Professori sogliono, grazie al nuovo *Ratio studiorum*, dischiudere a' loro scolari quel fonte di bellezza e di sapienza ereditato dalle cattedre della moderna letteratura. Di queste esercitazioni si raccolgono talora in solenni accademie i frutti, sul finire dell'anno scolastico; e di quest'anno medesimo mi fu fatto per caso di risaperne da Napoli e da Orvieto. « Ottimo consiglio ne sembra scrive il giovane Maestro di Orvieto nella prefazione al suo Saggio accademico del 1845, il volgere fin dalla tenera età all'*altissimo poeta*, ed all'*altissimo canto* la mente e l'affetto de' giovanetti studiosi. . . . . A questo fine *ne' tre anni scorsi* fu incessivamente proposta allo studio de' giovani una delle tre cantiche — ma in quest'anno ci proponemmo di dare una compiuta idea di tutto il poema, e un pieno esposto delle bellezze poetiche. Alcuni scelti giovani tra rettorici ed umanisti — oltre il saggio a tutti comune, si offrono . . . . . a recitare il passo, che più sarà in grado de' leggitori; poi vi faranno il commento secondo i migliori espositori — e gli daranno luce col necessario corredo di scienza e di erudizione; sveleranno bene speditamente nelle allegorie *la dottrina, che s'asconde sotto il velame degli versi strani*; e soprattutto svolgeranno le bellezze della lingua, dell'eloquenza e della poesia; però lasceranno talora di notar qualche errore del ghibellino, del filosofo, o del poeta, poichè non ci piace di dar con alcuni a Dante quasi un culto superstizioso, e noi siamo ammiratori, non idolatri. »

Per me non vedo, che il dovere di maestro o di educatore, che l'amor patrio, la devozione al divino poeta, possano esigere di più.

Vedi tu se le parole, che ti furono ispirate a pingere la Compagnia come avversa al sacro carme, e intesa a fuggirne il suono, a soffocarne la sapienza, non sapranno alcun che dell'usato declamare di certi altri, che la Chiesa cattolica rinnega la Bibbia e la sottrae dalle mani de' fedeli.

Col gridare *la Bibbia, la Bibbia*, s'intende consacrare agli occhi del volgo una causa tutt'altro che pia, e frattanto la parola rinchiusa in quel volume non ne risulterà punto più chiara o più venerata.

Or fra le cose più sacre e più care alla pietà popolare questa non è la sola, ma da interessate fazioni sia tolta quasi a bandiera affine di illudere, chi ha sensi di amor patrio. — Bada adunque, che mentre in nome del culto dantesco tu scomunichi la Compagnia come straniera e nemica all'Italia, tu non paia di quegli illusi — che bello, il sublime della divina Commedia, non sia per esser profanato, voltorizzato, studiato in un entusiasmo fattizio, niente più lodevole di quello che sia il peccato dantesco.

Ma non spingiamo lo sguardo troppo oltre — e torniamo ai lavori letterarii della Compagnia.

Perchè, ripiglieresti, perchè fra i letterati della Compagnia, per quanti

Non è questo un fatto che prova quanto la regola gesuitica sia nata a smorzare ogni nobil fiamma, ogni scintilla di quel sacro fuoco che accende i vati? E uomini di cuore agghiacciato, uomini che han morta l'anima, saranno in letteratura più che pedanti o leggeri?

Or dimmi tu fra i tanti milioni d'uomini che non sono stati nè Gesuiti, nè scolari de' Gesuiti, quanti sorsero in questi tre secoli i poeti di quel valore, che vorresti fra noi?

Non solo la poesia è dono di natura, più che non frutto d'alcuna istituzione scolastica; ma io crederei che i pochissimi i quali ne siano favoriti vogliano esser sciolti non che dalle regole claustrali, ma da molti impegni ancor comuni nella vita civile. Sono tempre di spirito creato a contemplare, a sentire, a cantare, ma dominate da un'armonia, che non è quella del mondo reale; con cui raro è, che procedan d'accordo. La vita pratica o loro è straniera, o campo di contrasti e di dolori.

Ma per quanto una tal condizione abbia del grande e del bello, non segue tuttavia che il viver a norma di riflessione e a servizio del comune, sia poi cosa sì irragionevole e vile. Una regola di spirito, che induca a procedere con ferma misura al debito fine, ad apprezzar i mezzi, che vi inducono, e frenare le passioni e la fantasia, sarà tanto meno poetica, ma non sarà meno sublime o meno utile al mondo.

Anzi se una parte degli uomini ha da essere in qualche guisa subordinata all'altra, e riceverne lume e direzione e sostegno, questa ha da essere la più illuminata, sì, la più eminente in vigore di spirito, ma eziandio la più riflessiva, non già la più ardente o la più vaga di commozioni. — Il filosofo, il legislatore, il sacerdote sono quelli che formano la gerarchia governatrice del mondo; il vate è nunzio straordinario del cielo. Esso apparisce al sorgere di un'era novella, fra l'agitazione degli elementi d'una società che rinasce piena di memorie e di speranze; or sottegni l'ordine, la legge, la filosofia, la civiltà; ed il vate si ritira, la poesia si smorza. — In questa rimangono le tradizioni, se ne vagheggia la sublime bellezza, se ne ritraggono imitazioni più o meno artificiali, se ne riaccendono scintille più o meno fugitive. Ma non crea più nulla di grande, di popolare, di efficace. — Ora qual era lo stato sociale al sorgere della Compagnia? Qual fu in questi tre secoli? Se non fu per il poetico — se fu per la parte del mondo cattolico niente più che il sistemare il potere — se l'ardor popolare procedeva da un principio eterodosso e di disordine — se l'ordine legittimo non potè sfuggire allo spirito di ambizione, di adulazione, di calcolo, di gare politiche — se la nuova civiltà divenne affare dei gabinetti o degli economisti; e salvo alcuni tratti di eroismo individuale, i popoli non s'ispirarono fuorchè di diffidenza, di malcontento o di interesse, — e risorgendo senza fede a principii comuni, non sanno costituirsi fuorchè sopra un equilibrio artificiale di opposizioni, — dove potè sorgere una poesia originale, nobile, eroica? o come sarebbe stata accolta? Si fecero bensì udire e vati di corte e poeti democratici; la riforma religiosa ispirò pur una poesia ardita, vaga di tentare nuovi sentieri, e anch'essa, come il protestantismo, ribelle ai principii comuni; ma in poche parole (poichè le notevoli eccezioni sono scarse) non potè prodursi una poesia altro che faziosa, ipocrita, leggiera o pedantesca — tolta per avventura quella, che risalì a Cristo, o al Paradiso, seppe comunque tenersi sopra le politiche idee del tempo ai sommi principii di umanità, di giustizia, di religione; il che è pur una specie di bando dal mondo attuale e al poeta una morte civile.

La civiltà istessa adunque rimuove la poesia; ed i Gesuiti dovrebbero di riputare tanto più innocenti, quanto si voglia dire all'andamento preso dalle cose vili più avversi.

*Pellico.*

ghiosi. — Non voler tuttavia che quel poeta sorga o dal tempio, o dall' ateneo, o dal foro. Al sacerdote, al filosofo, al magistrato appartengono la moderazione e la gravità del senno. E quanto gli istituti religiosi partecipano all' uno o all' altro di questi premi uffici, quanto son chiamati più specialmente ad istruire e ad educare, tanto più si può richiedere, che a perfezione del loro essere, siano scuola di grandi poeti.

La fuori della sfera propria all' alta poesia rimane fra i popoli inciviliti la letteratura, il buon gusto, l' arte di vestire i proprii concetti con quelle forme, che gli antichi modelli ritratti dagli antichi più dappresso al tipo ideale del bello, possono convogliare al fine della parola.

Questo pregio si riduce all' imitare ed emulare con discernimento. — E richiede due sole condizioni. — La prima, che non si rimuovano mai dagli occhi i soli modelli lasciati dall' antichità; la seconda, che si eserciti la mente e la parola a trarne le forme sopra tutte le altre materie del ragionare moderno. — Al che certamente lo studio de' nazionali, che già diedero esempio lodevole di siffatta imitazione. Or il mantenere inviolate queste due condizioni, è debito degli istitutori di gioventù. — Le ha mantenute, fra gli altri corpi insegnanti la Compagnia? Ecco a che si voglia apprezzare il merito delle sue scuole, il vero stato della questione.

E prima, quanto all' esercitare i giovani al parlare ed allo scrivere nelle lingue classiche, il fatto è sì fuor di questione, che anzi la sua costanza in questa parte non omai materia di continuo rimprovero, quasi in ciò faccia perdere il tempo ai suoi scolari. — Si vuol che imparino più presto lo stile corrente e le lingue moderne, e per ciò si forniscano di idee usuali, che ne sian materia. Ma ho già esposta altrove questa querela, e dimostrato che per lo meno è qui un problema troppo difficile a sciogliere, da doverlo abbandonare al giudizio di quel ceto che mira all' interesse del momento. Ed è al certo acconcia via all' arte di maneggiare la propria lingua, l' esercitarsi prima a parlare e a scrivere nella lingua madre, e di materie simili a quelle che si hanno ritratte dagli antichi. — Quest' è un penetrare dapprima ne' segreti arcani dell' arte loro, e poi si è un seguirli ne' tratti più delicati delle loro bellezze, e imparare a conoscere il pregio, la difficoltà e le regole. — Ma non vogliamo che a ciò si termini la scuola. La lingua nazionale vi è coltivata fin dagli elementi. — Ne son proposti in compendii e antologie i modelli, e si dee molto spesso comporre ad imitazione di quelli. Non si scrivono veramente lettere di commercio, o dissertazioni politiche, o complimenti, ma in qualsiasi forma di stile sopra materie più o meno elevate, e acconcie a maturare il senso morale.

Gli eroi della patria, gli affetti di famiglia, i principî invariabili di sapienza sono la fonte de' temi, per cui il giovane discende a grado a grado dal mondo antico a maneggiare nella propria lingua i concetti e gli interessi, che potranno offerirgli nel corso della vita.

Chi impara a dipingere non dà subito mano ai colori, nè s' accinge sì presto a ritrarre i volti che incontra. La letteratura è una pittura. Essa suppone uno spirito fatto, un principio di discernimento, di buon gusto, di eleganza, — ma è un' imitazione; e richiede non solo che sian noti i modelli, e si abbiano in istinto, ma che si tengano sotto gli occhi; ma chi vuol giungere ad imitarli da maestro, cioè ad imitarli, cominci dal copiarne i singoli tratti, e non isdegni di prenderne con materiale esattezza i modi, finchè gli siano voltati in abito ed in natura.

Può adunque per questa parte esser lodata la Compagnia, come fedele al suo debito di istitutrice.

Ha essa ancora il merito di aver tenuti sotto gli occhi de' suoi discepoli i ge-



diffondere la notizia di quella letteratura. E chi cercò ultimamente di scemarle questo lode rispetto ai classici del Lazio, recando in esempio le edizioni *in usum Delphini*. Ma n' ebbero a ridere i dotti; e l' amor della giustizia lor fece notare nel fatto arrischiato, non poche reticenze maliziose.

1.° Nel lasciar supporre che quella collezione sia quasi tutto lavoro de' Gesuiti, mentre in tutto non furon questi che cinque o sei.

2.° Che sia impresa propria della Compagnia, mentre era disposizione de' professori del Delfino, i quali nominavano i collaboratori a lor talento, e la Compagnia non faceva altro, che concedere il soggetto da loro richiesto.

3.° Nel vilipendere tutte egualmente le edizioni *in usum Delphini*, come se meritassero d'essere condannate in un fascio, mentre due di quelle meritavano di essere riprodotte ai dì nostri nella raccolta de' Classici latini, e a Torino e a Parigi, le quali sole appunto sono entrambe di due Gesuiti, cioè il *Plinio* dell' Hardouin, e il *Cicerone* dell' Olivet, quanto ai commenti.

Ma se l' onore e la conservazione e lo studio dei classici dipendono pur in gran parte dalla cura de' critici, i quali ne verifichino e ne fermino le lezioni genuine, restituiscano i testi interpolati, o dichiarino i luoghi difficili, o comunque gli illustrino con dotte osservazioni, ben mostrò la Compagnia come intendesse questo suo ufficio, mentre oltre alle due edizioni testè menzionate *in usum Delphini*, può ricordare, fuori di quella raccolta, il *Virgilio* del Lacerda, il *Tacito* del Brotier, il *Marziale* del Raderò, l' *Orazio* del Sanadon, le *Orazioni di Cicerone* dell' Abramo, e per lasciarne altre, i *poeti Cristiani* dell' Arevalo, tutte giudicate già dal pubblico per classiche (1).

Nè per aver consacrato a quest' ufficio durissimo alcuni suoi letterati, o pel trattenere che fa nelle scuole i suoi giovani all' imitazione elementare de' classici, si può pur ridotta ad una sorta di letteratura pedantesca e priva di originalità o d' ispirazione.

Questa mostrò singolarmente ne' varii generi di eloquenza, che hanno maggiore analogia co' suoi ministeri, e dove si spiega però più spontanea, più sciolta la sua energia.

Nell' oratoria sacra son collocati irrevocabilmente tra i modelli Segneri e Bourdaloue, intorno ai quali la Germania, la Polonia, la Spagna, il Portogallo non dubitano d'innalzar parimente un Wurz, un Hunnold, uno Scarga, un Calatayud, un Vieira.

E benchè non possano aver luogo fra i letterati coloro, che non lasciarono monumenti scritti, forse che non varranno a rimuovere dai nostri studi la taccia di pedantismo o di leggerezza que' tanti Missionarii della Compagnia, i quali dopo compiti con lode i corsi delle scuole, e sostenute parecchi anni le cattedre di Grammatica, d' Umanità, di Rettorica, datisi a seguir Gesù Cristo nella cura de' poveri ignoranti acquistarono tanta popolarità, ed operarono sì salutari commozioni? Francesco Strada, Edmondo Auger, Maunoir anche solo, la cui parola è ancor viva in tutto il Nord della Francia, S. Francesco Regis apostolo del Vivarese, S. Francesco di Gerolamo apostolo di Napoli, il P. Landini della Corsica, il Lanuza della Sicilia, per tacere del maggior Segneri, l' altro Paolo suo nipote, le cui prediche raccolte dal suo biografo Muratori, ammiratore della sua cristiana ed efficace eloquenza, furon poi sì felicemente ripetute dal B. Leonardo da Porto-Maurizio, qualunque sia

(1) Gli eruditi conoscono altresì la colossale fatica del P. Lagomarsini sopra le Varianti di Cicerone, che per mancanza di mezzi restò, e resta tuttavia inedita al Collegio romano, ma dal quale trassero profitto vari Tedeschi per le loro edizioni del romano Oratore.

Ma v'è aleno ramo di lettere sacre. in cui non si siano segnalati della Compagnia uomini coltissimi, e pieni tuttavia di quell'affetto, e di quell'unzione celeste che distingue il Dottor santo dal profano erudito?

Alcuni de' nostri Ascetici spagnuoli, tradotti in tutte le lingue e fatti popolari per pascolo dello spirito, sono nella lor patria fra i più classici per valor letterario. Bellarmino ci ha lasciato varii opuscoli in buona latinità, che pur sono carissimi al cuore di chi cerca Dio. Accoppiano similmente questi pregi nella lor lingua varii scritti francesi e tedeschi. Ma per parlare più specialmente degli italiani, oltre alle opere ascetiche e di purgato stile del Segneri, del Pinamonti, del Mariani, del La Fontaine, mi piace singolarmente rammentare appunto di quel tuo cantor delle favole, che fu P. Roberti, gli opuscoletti sì sodi ed utili: *Della probità naturale*, *Del lusso*, *Dei costumi*, *L'amor della patria*, *Sulla umanità del secolo XVIII*, *Sul leggere i libri di storia e di divertimento*.

O se a queste scritture contendi alcun merito citerò anche più volentieri l'opera *te della perfezione cristiana* del P. Pallavicini, nè faronne altro elogio fuorchè ripetere il giudizio stampatosi in testa dell'opera dal Giordani.

« Per la profonda saviezza di filosofia cristiana, dice egli, e per la nobiltà di stile purgatissimo, ci pare (questo) lavoro da ogni parte perfetto e stupendo.... »  
« La materia delle più insigni e rare, che abbia la religione e la nostra letteratura; opera in molte maniere diverse di persone possono leggere con egual profitto e diletto. »  
« Le anime pie vi trovano la religione trattata con tanta sapienza e dignità, che i devoti l'amano e i non devoti la riveriscono. I filosofi vi ammirano un ragionare profondo ed esatto, e ordinariamente da chiari e fermi principii dedotto. Gli amatori delle lettere italiane v'imparano proprietà elettissima ed efficacissima di pesati vocaboli, temperata vaghezza d'immagini, precisa chiarezza di frasi, nobile e consono giro di clausole, stile con eleganza dignitoso, vero esempio di perfetto scrivere, che non fu moderno allora, nè mai diverrà vecchio. »

Io sol mi permetterò di conchiudere su questo fatto, che se l'arte di associare il bello letterario al vero della filosofia e della religione è la più nobile ed ardua, non possa levarsi l'ingegno, ed opera più della scuola, che non della natura, non più la lode sarebbe alla scuola gesuitica, l'aver dato di sè nulla più che un simil sag.

La storia appartiene per un rispetto alla letteratura, per l'altro può essere considerata come autentico deposito delle tradizioni, come interprete dell'esperienza de' secoli.

I Gesuiti servirono allo Stato ed alla Chiesa lavorando alla storia ora con accurata esposizione de' fatti, ed ora con esatte compilazioni de' documenti.

Anche solo la storia della Compagnia oltre a parecchi scrittori rinomati fra i gesuiti, ha nel Bartoli un autore, che l'Italia sa apprezzare.

Scrissero pure latinamente varie parti di storia i PP. Maffei, Torsellino, Fagnano Strada; e la traduzione di una parte di questa, lavoro della gioventù del Segneri, rinchiude tesori di lingua.

La *Storia di Spagna* del Mariana è celebre così nella sua lingua patria, come nella latina, in cui la volse egli medesimo: e celebre è altresì la voluminosa istoria del Masden, sebbene in qualche punto degna di censura.

La storia *ecclesiastica* del Bercastel, la storia del *Concilio di Trento* e la *Storia di Alessandro VII* del Pallavicini, e i *Pontefici* del Novaes ec.

Le storie *Ungheresi* del Katone e del Pray, gli annali della *Germania* del Meuschen, la statistica *Ecclesiae germanicae* dell'Holl ec.

La *storia di Francia*, e quella della *Milizia francese* del P. Daniel, il *Libro di Rienzo* del P. Ducerceau ec.

leans ec.

La *Descrizione istorica ec. della Cina e della Tartaria cinese* del P. Du Halde, mi dispensano pel noto loro merito dal recitarne più che il titolo e dal menzionare il Charlevoix, il Maillac, il Coleti, il Clavigero, il Dobrizboffer coi tanti altri, i cui notizie furono raccolte diligentemente, quanto a questa parte, nella Biografia universale, e che in Italia, in Germania, e fin dall'Oriente e dalle Americhe ci tramandarono o i loro compendii di storie generali, o le narrazioni particolari delle vicende de' loro tempi, e de' popoli da lor visitati.

Bensi è da ricordarsi distintamente come riputata fra i diplomatici la *Storia del trattato di Westfalia* del P. Bougeant.

Ma qualunque sia il merito di questi scritti singolare è quello delle *Lettere edificanti e curiose*. Du Halde, Verjus, Ingoult, Fleurian, Griffet non isdegnarono di consacrare modestamente i loro anni a solo dirigerne la pubblicazione, e coloro, che trasmettevano dalle estremità del mondo quelle memorie sì svariate e preziose, erano uomini degni di splendere nelle accademie di Parigi, di Londra, di Pietroburgo, delle quali erano socii corrispondenti.

Meno dilettevoli alla lettura, ma niente meno pregevoli presso i critici, sono poche altre specie di lavori a pro della scienza de' fatti.

Tali sono la grande collezione della *Storia Bisantina*, impresa del P. Labbe sotto gli auspici di Luigi XIV a cui dedicolla, e proseguita parte da altri Gesuiti, parte da eruditi stranieri alla Compagnia; la gran collezione *dei Concilii*, intorno alla quale al Labbe e al Cossart successe l'Hardouin per ordine e a spese del Clero francese; gli *Acta Sanctorum*, cominciati a raccogliersi dal Bolland, e che resero sì famosi Henschen, Papebroeck, Janning, Du Sollier, Stilting, Ghesquière, e altri parecchi; la *Storia della Chiesa gallicana*, raccolta da Longueval, Fontenay, Berthier, ecc. i *Concilii delle Gallie* del P. Sirmond; l'*Itirico Sacro* dei PP. Recupito, Farlati e Coleti; la collezione de' *Concilii di Germania* opera de' PP. Schannat, Hartzheim, Neissen e Scholl.

La storia della letteratura nazionale e l'universale, che oltre al Tiraboschi e all'Andres ricorda i PP. Zaccaria, Dobrowski, Lampillas, Toderini, Quadrio; finalmente, poichè non intendo di ordinare qui una compiuta bibliografia, il giornale de' *Travoux*, che conta fra i suoi collaboratori i Merlin, i Charlevoix, i Brumoy, i Tourne mine, De la Tour, Souciet, Buffier, Rouillé, Routh, ecc. attesta come la Compagnia si sia sentita in vigor di lettere, e in ampiezza di studi per fornire a tanta varietà di lavori chi ne sostenesse la lode al cospetto dell'Europa.

E non sarebbe a perdonarsi ad uomini di questa fatta l'aver concessa allo stile scherzevole de' poemetti qualche raro momento di ozio?

Non è pur cosa da mirarsi di sì mal occhio un'elegante coltura congiunta con quella forza di critica, e con quella mole di erudizione; o fu pur grande e sincera in quegli uomini la passione di giovare alla chiesa e alla repubblica, se a questa sacrificarono un'indole più inclinata alle arcadiche leggerezze.

Tal fu infatti la comune direzione data dalla Compagnia ai suoi Religiosi. Gli studi letterarii erano la prima palestra, in cui tutti si esercitavano i suoi giovani studenti. In quelli si avvaloravano dopo la filosofia col ripigliarli insegnando Grammatica, Umanità e Rettorica. Intanto si manifestavano le vocazioni più speciali alla letteratura, e i pochi soggetti, in cui fosse per eminenti prove riconosciuta, potevano dopo studiata teologia rientrare nelle Scuole in qualità di Maestri o di Prefetti, e consacrarsi intieramente alle lettere umane. Ma la maggior parte di coloro, che uscivano dal corso teologico si dirigevano secondo lo scopo finale dell'Istituto a ministeri o a studi di più immediato servizio della religione. Gli uni più atti alla predicazione e a regger



dava a sperare miglior successo, e niuno però fosse privo di quella prima coltura letteraria, che abbellisce la scienza e la vita.

Ma ragion voleva, che sopra le lettere fossero nella Compagnia in onore uso le scienze, e le profane si ordinassero al medesimo fine, che le sacre; e ciascuna fosse coltivata conforme era a sperarne gloria a Dio nel servizio Chiesa.

Ond' è che il vero giudizio del quanto gli studi della Compagnia abbiano contribuito alla civiltà non dovrebbe posare unicamente sopra il merito de' suoi letterati, molto più sopra i suoi lavori scientifici, e molto più sopra i suoi ministeri Apostolici. Perchè niun istituto può rendersi più utile allo Stato altrimenti, che col raggiungere il fine, cui è per sua propria natura ordinato; e il fine della Compagnia essendo promuovere la fede e l'osservanza della legge cristiana per la salute delle anime, le si può domandare che le lettere e le scienze, cui essa adotta per mezzi a quel fine, siano per lei coltivate e vantaggiate, se non quanto si richieda a conseguirlo.

Chi anzi voglia por mente alla condizione del Sacerdote della Compagnia, sempre occupato in tali uffizi dove ora il servizio domestico, ora la cura spirituale del prossimo, e sempre il dovere sacrosanto della meditazione, degli esami, e degli altri privati esercizi di pietà, gli tolgono tante ore, che altri avrebbe libere per lo studio, potrà dire, che se tanti Gesuiti hanno prodotto con le stampe opere non disprezzabili per la fatica, pel merito, per la pubblica utilità, certo fu quello uno zelo, che non misurava al solo debito di giustizia.

Ma poichè di quanto un ordine religioso possa operare secondo i fini della Compagnia, e dell'istituto suo proprio, lo Stato non può formare giudizio, e fra gli zelanti della civiltà, i più non guardano che all'utile, ed alla gloria ch'essa raccolga immediatamente da qualsiasi professione di cittadini, resta, che per respingere l'accusa di inetti o di barbari, i Gesuiti e tutti i Religiosi debbano dimostrare, senza riguardo al tempo, quanto si richiedesse per loro propria istituzione, che pur coltivarono e lettere e scienze, quanto la condizione dei tempi comportava — e dal comune de' dotti si esigeva.

Come ho fatto adunque rispetto alle lingue, alla poesia, all'eloquenza, alla storia, così raccoglierò alcuni nomi e alcuni monumenti, i quali attestino che le matematiche, la fisica, l'astronomia, le scienze naturali e divine, ancorchè subordinate com'erano nel nostro istituto a un fine apostolico, non cessarono tuttavia di essere coltivate con lode.

E piacemi di ciò fare dapprima con parole di giudici competenti ed imparziali: Montucla, di Lalande, di Leibnizio.

Le loro parole attestano più specialmente il merito di molti nostri in astronomia, ma valgono abbastanza per dar il debito concetto del grado, in cui fossero altre scienze coltivate, e da parecchi di que' medesimi astronomi, e da altri loro colleghi le altre scienze della fisica, e della matematica di que' tempi.

Montucla (*Hist. des mathématiques par Montucla et Lalande*, Tom. 1, pag. 4, parte 2, ann. VII) parla de' Missionarii gesuiti della Cina. Ecco alcuni suoi giudizi: — « Les savants missionnaires dont nous parlons ne se sont pas contentés de réformer l'astronomie chinoise sur les principes de celle des Européens, mais ils ont encore été très-utiles à l'astronomie Européenne par leurs observations, ainsi que par les lumières, qu'ils ont données sur la géographie des pays orientaux et de la Chine. »

« Il n'est aucun de ces laborieux missionnaires, à qui l'on ne doive des connaissances utiles en astronomie. »

Leibnizio: *Majora* (nempe Galileanis et Cavallerianis) *subsidia attulere triumviri illustres, Cartesius ostensa ratione lineas geometriae communis exprimendi per aequationes, Fermatius inventa methodo de maximis et minimis, ac Gregorius a S. Vincentio multis preclaris inventis.* (Leibnitz. Acta Eruditorum Lipsiae 1695).

Nel medesimo tomo 2, pag. 314 loda del P. Scheiner la pantografia, e l'istrumento *pantografo* da lui trovato; « cet instrument seul mériterait l'immortalité de son inventeur; tant il est utile aux artistes. »

E prosegue commendando per merito di scoperte il P. De la Faille, ed il P. Grimaldi, *auteur de la découverte de l'inflexion de la lumière* (1).

Facendo singolar menzione di parecchi nostri astronomi cinesi dà ragguagli della lor vita. Loda poi molto il P. Kirker, e come già sopra ho notato, non lascia senza elogio i poemetti del Noceti *de Iride*, e *de Aurora boreali*.

Nel tomo 4.<sup>o</sup> dove narra l'erezione degli osservatorî, buon numero ne rammenta la cui celebrità, o ancor l'origine è dovuta agli astronomi della Compagnia.

L'osservatorio di Lione fu fondato dal P. De S. Bonnet, cui successe il P. Rabuel il commentatore della geometria di Descartes, a questi il P. Duclos, professore di matematica nel Collegio, poi fino alla soppressione dell'Ordine il P. Beraud, del quale dice queste parole: « Je suis charmé d'avoir cette occasion de jeter ici quelques fleurs sur la tombe de ce savant et respectable Jésuite, qui m'a mis en quelque sorte dans les mains le premier livre de géométrie, de même qu'aux citoyens Lalande et Bossut » (T. 4. p. 348.).

E aggiugne: Je dirai ici à la louange de cette Société savante et si cruellement traitée, que dans plusieurs de ses collèges il y avait des observatoires. »

E prosegue menzionando quelli di Marsiglia, di Avignone, di Manheim, di ciascuno de' quali nomina i direttori Gesuiti.

Quello di Vienna fu ingrandito dal P. Hell; — il P. Liesganig fondò quello di Lemberga; i PP. Stepling e Retz fondarono quello del collegio di Praga.

I Gesuiti di Milano fondarono a proprie spese la Specola di Brera, fatti venir da Roma il P. Boscovich, e di Francia il P. Lagrange, cui succedettero i PP. Gera e Reggio, e il De Cesaris.

A Roma nel collegio Romano non era prima della soppressione della Compagnia Osservatorio astronomico propriamente detto, benchè si fosse seriamente pensato a costruirlo fin dal tempo di Benedetto XIV., mentre era ivi rettore il P. Borgondio astronomo e matematico; ma, come scrisse l'astronomo e prof. Ab. Giuseppe Calandrelli (*Giorn. Arcad. t. II. pag. 410*) può dirsi che il collegio Romano sia stato un Osservatorio astronomico continuato da Clavio in poi. Dopo il Clavio fu di fatto il collegio Romano osservatorio pel P. Scheiner, e successivamente pei PP. Gottignies, Eschinardi, Borgondio, Boscovich e Asclepi. Tutti questi osservavano in qualche parte elevata del collegio coi migliori stromenti, che poteano avere.

Di propria fondazione de' Gesuiti fu ancora l'osservatorio di Gratz; quello del collegio di Firenze, diretto ora dai RR. PP. delle Scuole Pie, fu fondato dal P. Ximenez.

(1) Il merito principale del P. Grimaldi non si è ben conosciuto se non a' nostri giorni. Egli fu il primo scopritore del secondo e importantissimo principio dell'*interferenza*, ed annunziò chiaramente che in certi casi la luce aggiunta ad altra luce genera oscurità. Vedi la sua opera *De lumine* etc. L. I. prop. XXII. Questo fatto tra le mani di Young e di Fresnel è divenuto fondamentale nell'ottica e il precipuo mezzo per definire la gran questione sulla natura della luce. In fine dell'opera citata si legge una breve biografia del Grimaldi, scritta dal P. Riccioli, celebre astronomo, di cui era stato esso Grimaldi utile collaboratore, e al quale la storia di questa scienza va debitrice dell'*Almagestum*.

ti, ne altri nomi che l'istorico prosegue a raccogliere tra i Gesuiti siano preposti specole di Wilna, di Madrid ec.

Lalande s' esprime anche in più luoghi con maggior affetto per una società, quale conosceva tanti degni cultori della medesima sua scienza. Nel 1800 egli pubblicava nel *Bien informé* ( 3 février ) un articolo sopra la Compagnia di Gesù. « fut, dic' egli, le plus bel ouvrage des hommes, dont aucun établissement humain n' approchera jamais, l' objet éternel de mon admiration, de ma reconnaissance et de mes regrets. » Ed io estraggo queste parole dal compendio, che il medesimo Lalande lavorò della biografia del Montucla, scritta da Leblond, nella quale ad ogni che si narrano le relazioni di quell' astronomo coi Gesuiti, ama di vedersi associati agli stessi sentimenti. « On a vu dans plusieurs endroits de cette histoire comment Montucla conservait de reconnaissance pour les Jésuites, et son ami Lalande publia ces sentiments au point de faire imprimer dans le *Bien informé* etc. »

Altri prima di me moltiplicarono già gli estratti di testimonianze niente solenni, con cui piacque a questo valente di commendare il nostro Istituto, non già troppo, per simpatia religiosa, che a questo il legasse, ma appunto pel solo titolo qui consideriamo, della scienza; nè io voglio aggiungere altro.

Lo studio delle matematiche e dell' astronomia prese a prevalere nel secolo passato fra i Gesuiti non tanto forse per altro impulso, quanto in vista delle missioni, cui queste scienze aprivano la via: il favore poi che esse procacciavano in seno presso le accademie d' Inghilterra, di Germania, di Russia fu nelle loro speranze stoliche un nuovo motivo di sostenersi in quel merito (1).

Per quel medesimo principio di zelo troveremmo per avventura in questa Compagnia di Sacerdoti un numero di artisti, fuori di proporzione, rispetto a quello che si sarebbe richiesto ai soliti uffizii del loro stato. — Ma le missioni ne' paesi barbari ponevano a questi sacerdoti la necessità di conoscere e d' insegnare l' architettura, l' agricoltura, l' arte di filare e di tessere; le missioni li fecero musici, ingegneri, meccanici, medici, *omnibus omnia* (2).

(1) L' Imperator delle Russie Paolo chiamava a Pietroburgo il P. Gruber per ordinare il gran gabinetto di Storia naturale.

(2) Non furono sole le missioni straniere a raccogliere qualche segnalato servizio: opere de' nostri religiosi in fatto di arti, di economia politica, ec.

Il *Risorgimento della Sardegna*, opera del P. Gemelli, porge ancora al presente nel compendio fattone dal Cav. Serra, utile direzione alle riforme desiderate, in quell' isola sotto lo sguardo dello spello agrario.

Uno de' primi a dettare pubbliche lezioni di agricoltura fu il P. Mitterpacher; le sue opere meritano una traduzione italiana stampata a Venezia nel 1795 in sei tomi.

Scrissero pure di questo argomento i PP. Arena, Wulsen, Fischer, Xuares, Apfaltr.

Di farmacia trattarono Mojon, Montenegro, Lima, Galletti, Gillis ec.

Di medicina Capnel, Esteyneffer, Clain, Stoll, Falkner ec.

Gli spagnuoli son grati al nostro Ibanez dell' aver loro restituito all' uso un antico teatro romano, che già i francesi in questi ultimi tempi avean ridotto a disperarsene la restaurazione.

Il P. Jazeolla si è fatto conoscere valente architetto ai giorni nostri nella fabbrica del nuovo collegio di Brescia, e in altre per l' Italia.

Prima di questi il P. Boscovich avea rimesso in equilibrio quella gran mole della cupola di S. Pietro in Roma, e i PP. Walcher, Cabral, Ximenes, Lecchi, Sivieri avean reso imparecchiabili i servigi nel ristorare strade, in arginare fiumi, in gettar ponti ec. — Il ponte a Reggiolo, volto a sbieco cavalca il Crostolo, è architettura del P. Borgo.

La gran chiesa di sant' Ignazio in Roma è disegno del Grassi.

Il bel collegio di Mondovì disegno del P. Falletti di Barolo stato molti anni professore di matematiche e di architettura civile nel collegio de' Nobili a Torino.

Il Weith (*Bibl. ang.*) ricorda le fabbriche del P. Urban in Dusseldorp — e sono sopra questo argomento le opere a stampa dei PP. Fournier, Deran ec.

voli lavori dei Gesuiti in opere di vario sapere umano, siano talvolta dovuti appunto a un'occasione che aveva per oggetto un dovere apostolico, il quale li stimolò ad entrar più avanti negli arcani d'ogni disciplina, per quindi avvalorarne la parola di Dio. Proseguiamo a vederne i frutti di vario genere.

I viaggi de' Missionarii non solo perfezionarono la geografia (1), ma arricchirono l'antiquaria, recarono nuove notizie in confermazione de' libri santi, o delle ecclesiastiche traduzioni, e ampliarono i confini dell'industria, della botanica (2), dell'arte medica, della filologia (3), in una parola d'ogni sapere, che posi sopra l'osservazione de' fatti (4).

La Savoia ed il Piemonte non dimenticano il P. De Chales tra le prime guide al loro genio civile.

Conosciuto è pure il gran Lessico militare del P. D' Aquino.

L'Italia e la Germania serbano con istudio le pitture del nostro Pozzi; la Fiandra quelle del Seghers, e l'Europa tutte quelle del Borgognone. Ma qual servizio non recarono a tutta quest'arte la classica *Storia* del Lanzi, i *Saggi* del Requeno sopra la *pittura antica*, i *Commentarii* della pittura encaustica del P. Pietro de la Huerta?

Anche nella musica (dico specialmente nella teoretica) si distinsero i PP. Kirker, Ulloa, Eximeno, Pereyra, Geoffroy ec., e ai di nostri il P. Lambillotte.

Non parlerò de' pubblici orologi, degli organi nelle chiese ec.

(1) Nell'ultima guerra contro la Cina gli inglesi non seguivano altre carte fuori di quelle degli antichi Gesuiti. — E si sa che fu opera de' Missionarii della Compagnia la descrizione esatta di quasi tutto il Nuovo Mondo. — Singolarmente pregiate sono le descrizioni dei grandi fiumi dell'Indie, del Maragnone pel P. Fritz, dell'Orenoco pel P. Gumilla, del Gange pel P. Tieffenthaler. — Scopritori di nuove tribù e terre del continente delle Americhe furono fra gli altri i PP. Albanel, Marquette, Grillet, Jolis, Bechamel, Guasp, ec.

(2) La Flora Fiuminiana, ossia di Rio-Janeiro, cui la delicatezza di questo secolo stimolò bene di pubblicare anonima, era lavoro di vent'anni d'un missionario Gesuita di quelle parti. — Ma gli resero giustizia nei giornali i dotti. — Alcune piante esotiche portano ancora il nome de' missionarii, che le trapiantarono in Europa. Le belle Camelie e la Cobeia, ornamenta de' nostri giardini, ricordano i PP. Camel e Cobo, e del primo Linneo stesso volle perpetuarne la memoria. — Senza che troppe altre sono di maggior utilità, le quali ricordano, se non il nome, certo la diligenza e l'amor patrio di quegli uomini apostolici.

(3) L'etnografia, come scienza, fu, prima che di altri, concetto del P. Hervas. — L'opera di questo Gesuita, *Idea dell'universo*, in 21 tomi in 4.º, e l'altra, *Catalogo delle lingue conosciute*, 6 tomi, sono tesori di scienza e di erudizione.

Quanto poi abbiano conferito i Missionarii delle singole nazioni a ridurre le lingue a regola, e a farle conoscere in Europa lo sanno le Accademie — e le Società bibliche — le quali ora ristampano quelle grammatiche e que' lessici de' Gesuiti, ora ne ricordano e ne spogliano ne' lor commenti le opere.

(4) Del quanto per ogni rispetto valessero, ed abbiano operato a pro dell'antico e del nuovo mondo gli scienziati e gli artisti della Compagnia abbiamo frequenti testimonianze niente sospette di parzialità nella *Biografia universale*, e specialmente negli articoli lavorati da Abel Rémusat. — A darne alcun quadro in succinto la storia fornirebbe le *Riduzioni del Paraguay* — miracolo risuscitato ai nostri giorni fra le *Teste-piatte* dai PP. Smet, Mengarini, Ravalli, Nobili, Accolti ec. — Ma il più magnifico è quello della Cina. Ivi il Tribunale delle matematiche dal P. Ricci ai PP. Amiot e Cibot fu cosa della Compagnia; e fra questi astronomi sono molti di chiara fama, uno Scall, un Gaubil, un Hallerstain, un Koegler ec. — Il P. Werbiest insegnò ai Cinesi in una grand'opera scritta nella lor lingua a fondere metalli e ogni arma da fuoco. — Pittori di corte furono i PP. Sikelpart e Masson, e i FF. Attirel, Castiglioni, Pansi, Banchemo genovese ec. — Lavoratore in vetri d'ogni fatta il F. Brossart, — in meccanismi di fontane e getti d'acqua il F. Thibault, — farmacisti e botanici i FF. Paracchino di Genova, Baudin, Pignone ec. E tutto questo in servizio della Missione, e in aumento della Fede, che ne era poi il solo fine in questo mondo, di quella Fede, per cui confermarla nel 1745, un anno dopo il decreto Benedettino sopra i Riti Cinesi, la Compagnia in quella provincia dava ancora il sangue e la vita di due generosi suoi figliuoli, i PP. D'Attemis ed Henriquez, messi spietatamente a morte dai Mandarini (*Butler 5 febb.*). — Oggidi nella Cina, colla giunta de' novellamente spediti son dodici incirca de' nostri: — ma quante le rovine da rialzare

an obbligo annuo alla Compagnia di leggere la scuola di Maria in Louvain.  
L' *Arte della fortificazione ec.* del P. Borgo, opera classica nel suo genere, gli meritò da Federico il Grande il grado di Tenente Colonnello, è dovuta ad una conversazione, in cui quel Padre ebbe a raddrizzare le idee religiose d'alcuni uffiziali contrati in un albergo. Il P. Benedetto Mari matematico e idraulico ebbe anche piego di soprastante alle fortificazioni di Mantova verso il 1800, il Luino alla scuola militare palatina di Milano.

La carità divina, unico stimolo, perpetuo, potentissimo del Gesuita, il quale tendeva la sua vocazione, così spingeva i dotti a levarsi alla cima della scienza, a scoprire i misteri della natura, ad inventare nuove arti d'util comune, a quel modo medesimo, che ispirava altri niente men nobili per altri rispetti ad abbracciare l'ultima minia dei *Parias*, o a dividere la caccia e la tenda dell'Irochese. — Il P. Francesco Lana-Terzi, uno degli inventori de' globi aereostatici, avea cent'anni prima del 1675 de l' *Epée* (1) trovata l'arte di istruire i sordo-muti, e i ciechi-nati; e creato il metodo natoio, di cui dà la descrizione l'Algarotti.

Lo zelo pel culto de' santi, e per la purità delle tradizioni cattoliche ispirò al P. Rosweido una prima edizione con note erudite delle *Vitae patrum*, e questa opera presa, che apre la via a quelle altre sì colossali de' PP. Maurini e de' Bollandisti, di più la scienza de' diplomi (2).

Il diritto canonico e civile fu sempre un mare di questioni, la critica, la giurisprudenza, la disciplina ecclesiastica, la storia civile, la pace della Chiesa e delle nazioni legavano naturalmente allo studio delle leggi; parve a' Gesuiti di dovere concorrere coi loro sforzi a spianarne le difficoltà (3): e il fecero quali con ordinate *Istituzioni* come lo Schwartz ed il Guarini, quali come Schmidt e Giacomo Sirmondo con nuove edizioni de' canoni, de' codici imperiali e de' capitolari (4).

Niuno pertanto metterà in dubbio, se la Compagnia abbia dato parimente che dotto commentatore de' libri santi, qualche studioso editore de' santi Padri, che teologo di grido, qualche filosofo. Bellarmino, Suarez, Petau, Delugo, Tassinio, Fronton Du Duc, Pererio, Cornelio a Lapide, Maldonato, Bonfrerio siano puramente mentati soli; ma nella scuola in cui siffatti uomini furono scolari prima, e poi maestri, gli studiosi non poterono essere nè sì pochi, nè sì ignobili, che le singole scienze delle scienze sacre o razionali, non ne ricevessero in due secoli sempre più luce (5).

(1) Molto prima si legge di un altro nostro padre, che istituì un sordo-muto co'segni, del quale poi si servì a maestro di altri sordo-muti, che furon raccolti in casa a spese nostre. Il racconto di questo fatto sta nelle *Litterae annuae Soc. Jesu an. 1605*, alla pagina 462 *non dissimile est quae*. Tolgo questa nota da un ms., che non ho qui il libro delle annue.

(2) Il Baringio nella sua *Clavis diplomatica* novera oltre al Papebroeck, i PP. Henseler, Mon, Grebner, Bodler, Roderique, Keller ed altri come scrittori non ignobili di quella scienza, che l'araldica ebbe uno scrittore nel P. Menestrier, la numismatica un Froelich, un Eckhel e c.

(3) Le sole province germaniche, dove la Compagnia avea parecchie Università, tutte fornirono una dovizia di buoni canonisti Pichler, Schmalzgrueber, Pirring, Wiestner, L. Zech ec.

(4) In opera meno voluminosa, ma con più immediato successo dell'umanità, il P. Federico trattò del procedere contro le streghe.

Il caritatevole esercizio dell'assistere ai condannati a morte, gli diede occasione di farsi avvocato delle tante vittime, che per sospetto di sortilegio soleano trarsi al rogo.

Leibnitz ne commenda la memoria non meno ai dotti, che ai Papi.

(5) Nelle edizioni de' Padri della Chiesa Du Duc, Gretzer, Sirmond, Poussines precedono Maurini: inoltre l'*Areopagita* del Cordier, il *Mario mercatore* del Garnier, il *Sant' Epifanio* di Petavio, il *Sant' Efrem* del Benedetti, il *Sant' Isidoro di Siviglia* dell' Arévalo sono opere non meno quanto le maurine.

Nè furono pochi i lavori de' nostri per accrescere la gran biblioteca de' Padri, oltre quelli nominati sopra, vi faticarono Pellano, Schott, Gibbon, Turriano, Delrio, Dausque ec.



Contratto sociale di Rousseau, Nonnotte, che vendica la Religione e la filosofia contro Voltaire, Veith e Goldhagen le sacre Scritture, Guénard, che proclama i diritti della rivelazione al cospetto dell' accademia, dove sedevano i precursori dell' ateismo, Guérin-du-Rocher, il quale dopo recato ad onor della Fede il tributo della sua vasta erudizione, la conferma insieme ad altri generosi col suo sangue.

Zaccaria, Muzzarelli, Feller, Brotier, Neuville, De Ligny, Baudrand non sopravvivon soli fra le tempeste che involsero in uno col loro sodalizio tante chiese e tanti Stati. Ogni città d' Europa vide alcuno di questi antichi campioni della Compagnia di Gesù ; e qualsifosse l' umile ministero cui la modestia, la carità, l' infermità li avesse fatti discendere, ognuno di essi però fu circondato da quella venerazione e da quella fiducia, cui suole ispirare una virtù accoppiata a squisita coltura.

Or rivive da circa trent' anni quel medesimo loro Istituto, rivive senza avere nell' intervallo della soppressione interrotto così il filo della vita e delle sue tradizioni domestiche da non avere fra i suoi primi ristauratori tali uomini, che l' indirizzassero nella via di prima. E egli a sperare ch' esso raggiunga nelle scienze e nelle lettere quel grado di merito, che risponda alla sua vocazione ?

Non si tratta invero, che di speranze, finora. — Chi esigesse al presente che si scarso numero de' Gesuiti, che han terminato da pochi anni gli studi, già si fosse segnalato con opere degne di tanta fama, quanta a proporzione geometrica ne raccoglievano insieme da Parigi alla Cina, da Madrid al Perù i ventitremila, che si novellavano prima della soppressione, più che ingiusto, si mostrerebbe strano.

E prima, i trent' anni scorsi dalla Costituzione di Pio VII, non sono tanti fuorché per Roma e per l' Italia meridionale. La provincia del Piemonte non è costituita con gli studii regolari fuorchè da dodici anni in circa. Quelle di Portogallo e di Spagna furono rovinate sul bel principio. In Francia succedettero in vent' anni due dispersioni. La condizione poi dell' Inghilterra, del Belgio, della Svizzera, della Galizia (la quale è popolata in gran parte dagli esuli della Russia ), ancorchè rispetto agli studii non sia stata sì infelice, non è tale però che abbia dovuto condurre quelle Provincie a splendore letterario, anzichè a faticare ne' Collegi, ne' Convitti, o nelle Missioni, e negli ordinarii ministeri di Chiesa.

Volessimo fissare una media di vent' anni all' età della Compagnia dal suo rinascimento, quindici incirca li richiede l' Istituto ai corsi di studio e di prove prima della Professione ; resterebbero intorno a cinque anni di spazio dato a poter mostrare i frutti delle proprie dottrine.

Ma coloro, che avrebbero avuto quel poco spazio da illustrarsi con opere d' ingegno, a quanti monterebbero, se han da essere il fiore della sola prima generazione di studenti raccolti vent' anni fa ? Diresti assai, se qualche decina ; chè pochi erano i Noviziati, e non tutti i giovani, che vi entrarono sul principio poterono giungere al termine di quel lungo corso, dove avevano da formarsi a norma dell' Istituto ; e a quel che vi giunsero resta, che si dividano in parte i tanti officii dove nè alla mente nè al corpo rimane quiete da attendere di proposito ad opere letterarie, o scientifiche di qualche peso (1).

(1) Si potrebbe rispondere a chi pretende in sì pochi anni da noi opere, cui i nostri vecchi appena maturarono in lunghi anni di vita e di religione colle parole ( adattandole al caso nostro ) di S. Francesco Borgia a Carlo V. solitario in S. Giusto, che molto fuori di proposito gli chiedeva: *¿verdad que se hallan tan pocos ancianos subditos vuestros en estas cuatro provincias y aun en las otras, que no se vé una cana en tantas cabezas?* rispose molto bene il santo: *Senor, si la madre es moza. como seran viejos los Hijos?* — *Esta ENFERMEDAD, si lo es, presto la avran de curar los ANOS.* CIENFUEGOS Vida del grande S. Francisco de Borja lib. 4.

Aggiungi, come diceva, che ai tanti ministeri che ha la Compagnia, non bastando i pochi che ancora siamo, ci conviene essere occupati ciascuno in più officii, e qua e là tramandati, e posso assi-

colta fuori di essa, da poterle prestare in questa parte segnalati servigi, — onde son lontano dal consentire che agli uni e agli altri tu domandi pur qualche saggio opere di letteratura o di scienze giusta la lor professione. — Ma come ho da sfarti se que' saggi, che appunto hanno dati, e stimerei di qualche pregio, o li ignori o li conti per nulli, e fuor di proposito.

Se gli ignori tu che ti professi sollecito di conoscere l'andamento dello spirito presente in Europa, è dunque a dire che fin qui colesti miei scrittori Gesuiti non sono ancora sentiti menzionare nel mondo.

Se conoscendo le loro produzioni le sdegni, se le hai per inutili allo scopo dell'ingegno umano, ed al servizio della presente generazione, non son io quegli, che mi possa assumere di sostenere all'incontro, che sono tutte opere di molto pregio. Andrò menzionando alcune delle principali uscite alla luce le più in Italia od in Europa, con qualche cenno del giudizio, che altri ne abbia espresso; e tu sarai in tempo di riformare il tuo.

I PP. Caraffa, De Vico, Pianciani, Turner, De Sinno, Fatou io li aveva per qualche valore fra i matematici, gli astronomi, i fisici, i chimici di questo secolo. So che di loro altri fu fatto membro della Società de' quaranta in Italia, altri dell'Accademia di Torino, altri decorati di medaglia fin da Copenaghen.

I PP. Secchi, Marchi (1), Arturo Martin e Cahier, han dato negli studi de' monumenti antichi e del medio evo tali lor saggi da averne in riscontro da' critici d'Europa, e dalle loro Accademie quegli onori, con cui si suole in tal genere dimostrare la stima ed animare il valore.

I PP. Mac-Carthy e Finetti han lasciato nell'eloquenza del pulpito un nome, i loro scritti paiono ancor sostenere. — Il P. De Ravignan si è pur fatto conoscere per una scrittura, la quale risponde alla fama delle sue *conferenze* — il P. Parisi sta per le sue lezioni sopra Giobbe non avute in Sicilia per dispregevoli.

I PP. Bresciani e Carlo Grossi hanno sparso in pulito stile varie operette, che la gioventù studiosa rilegge con gusto e con profitto.

Il P. Kohlmann avea stampato in lingua inglese negli Stati-Uniti due volumi di controversie: — ma sarò pago se altri apprezza anche più il suo valore in teologia dal solo aver tratto alla fede cattolica il Dott. Theiner ora Prete dell'Oratorio di S. Filippo Neri in Roma, dove rende alla Chiesa con le sue erudite fatiche il più

curarti, e ne chiamo in testimonio il pubblico non v'essere città, dove i nostri sono, che non sentano de' lamenti pel continuo mutar de' soggetti, che i Superiori sono costretti di fare, nè si potranno, finchè la religione sarà in sul crescere e dilatarsi. Osserva il Ribadeneira che ne' primi anni della Compagnia non istampò che pochissimo. Nel 1548, l'ottavo della Compagnia, comparve il primo l'ammirabile libro degli *Esercizii*. Nel quattordicesimo il piccolo *Catechismo* del Canisio, e nel sedicesimo il libretto *del frequente uso dell'Eucaristia* del P. Mastracci. Ma dopo que' anni di estreme fatiche nel giro di un secolo solo diè alla luce tante opere, quanti sono i titoli che si raccolgono nella Biblioteca del Sothwell, a segno che il P. Lobineau maurino disse (vero in tutto, non voglio disputare il già giudicato da lui e da altri non pochi) *il n'y a point d'ordre dans l'Eglise qui ait produit plus d'écrivains en tout genre de littérature; leurs maisons de Paris ont donné un grand nombre, soit théologiens, soit philosophes, historiens, mathématiciens, grammairiens et autres etc.* (V. Histoire de la ville de Paris tom 2. pag. 1102). — Dell'Istituto è sempre il medesimo, e nulla ci manca de' nostri Padri, nè anco le tribolazioni della virtù e dell'ingegno per gli animi generosi, che non sanno invilire, nè mai pongono volentieri le loro mire che nell'arduo, più forti dove maggiori gli ostacoli.

(1) Della classica opera del Marchi fra i molti articoli in lode pubblicati in Italia e fuori, da leggere quello di Cesare Cantù nell'*Euganeo*.

lizia e del Tirolo scrisse una *Summa doctrinae christianae* il P. Weninger. Il trattato speciale *De Matrimonio* del P. Martin non è paruto indegno di essere pubblicato in difesa del diritto Ecclesiastico in quella materia. I due libri *De interpretatione Scripturarum Sacrarum* del P. Patrizi, rispondono al bisogno contro gli abusi dell'Ermeneutica eterodossa. E prima di questi il P. Rozaven nel suo esame del sistema di Lamennais rispetto alla teologia, non tanto provocava una polemica parziale, quanto poneva in sicuro l'intera base della scienza sacra. Senza che la sua confutazione anonima del russo Stourdza fu coronata con numerose conversioni.

Vedo pregiati dagli intendenti i saggi di Epigrafia del P. Carminati; il P. Loriquet ha pur qualche riputazione in Francia pei suoi compendî di storia e per le edizioni de' classici ad uso de' Collegii; la gramatica italiana del P. Paria raccoglie ancor essa i suffragii de' letterati; ma se entrassi a menzionare questa sorta di lavori, ancorchè pregevoli e molti, e di molta fatica, direi un merito da non potersi tuttavia stimare fuori delle scuole o delle accademie.

Il P. Prat compilò la storia dell'Eclesiastico e la vita di S. Ireneo, il P. Cahour la storia di N. D. di Fourvière presso Lione; ma l'uno e l'altro scrisse più peggior eruditi, che non per comune trattenimento de' dilettranti di lettura; ed io non ho da pronunziarne giudizio.

Fra gli eruditi di universale celebrità potrei bensì menzionare come gloria della Compagnia il Card. Mai: non sia però ch'io il faccia altrimenti fuorchè per l'ossequio, con cui esso ha diritto di essere menzionato nel novero di coloro che illustrarono l'abito e gli studi di lei. — L'eminente merito, per cui il sommo Pontefice lo riservò ad una vocazione più speciale a pro delle lettere, e a decoro della Chiesa, è tutto suo, e troppo superiore a quanto potè raccogliere dai suoi maestri, e dalle umili fatiche de' nostri scrittori presenti; ma egli avrebbe avuto ragione di chiamarci ingrati, se nella necessità ove altri ci mette di pronunziare qualche nome, onde ci tornava conto, avessimo taciuto il suo, che vale da sè solo per molti (1).

Ma non voglio proseguire più oltre la mia lista, raccogliendo o i fogli de' Bollandisti, che sarebbero già usciti alla luce sotto ai tuoi occhi, nè i viaggi sì edificanti e curiosi del P. Smet stampati pur a Bruxelles, or son due anni, nè il trattato di Matematica del P. Wallace sì riputato negli Stati-Uniti, nè altra qualsiasi produzione pubblicata in questi anni.

Ma perchè non dovrei rammentare que' filosofi, che ci contendi? I PP. Taparelli, Romano, Liberatore, Buc-zinski, Dmowski, Rothenflüë, e due altri o tre diedero alle stampe i loro trattati nel breve giro di que' pochi anni, in che appunto io dicevo testè doversi stringere lo spazio concesso alla Compagnia per dare i frutti della prima generazione de' suoi studenti.

Ai due primi tu credesti di poter dare qualche elogio, da non doversi però partecipare alla Compagnia loro madre ed istitutrice; ma essi protestano, che non accettano tali applausi, che offendano la lor religione, e come per l'affetto del cuore così per vincolo di intellettuale commercio voler esser tenuti per una cosa coi lor Padri e Fratelli.

Gli altri intesero di pubblicare niente più che il corso della loro scuola, e nella lingua usatavi. E benchè non presunano d'aver con questo primo saggio raggiunto il doppio scopo di giovare ai Professori insieme ed agli studenti, dal numero de' Co-

(1) L'insigne porporato con gentilezza non rara in anime grandi volle pubblicamente far noto il nome di un suo maestro. Nella prefazione ai libri *de Republica* di Cicerone, parlando di Verona dice *in patria praeclari magistri mei.... P. Alotati Fortis a quo nunc societas Jesu perpetua dignitate regitur*. Scriveva nel 1822.



Compagnia si prometta di compiacerne ; che di tal sorta è un miracolo se l'universale suffragio non possa vanterne in più secoli alcuno, che raccolga l'universale suffragio per tali altri, creatori di ipotesi o di sistemi, i quali dopo qualche strepito vengono a lasciare la scienza più intricata di prima, o al medesimo punto dove l'avevan trovata. Nè la Compagnia nè l'Italia si dan punto briga di educarne.

Ecco in che maniera concepisco io il debito della Compagnia di Gesù Cristo allo studio e all'insegnamento della filosofia.

### FILOSOFIA IN PARTICOLARE.

Le scuole pubbliche, dove la Compagnia insegna questa scienza, non hanno altro istituto altro scopo, se non quello studio preliminare, il quale si richiede a modo d'introduzione all'avviamento alle facoltà superiori.

I suoi propri studenti religiosi dovendo avvalorarsi in ogni disciplina tanto per diventare maestri, consacrano alle questioni più sublimi di filosofia un terzo della loro vita, ma certo anch'essi con uno scopo subordinato, cioè in quanto l'attingere più liberamente al fonte delle scienze razionali sia per giovare e all'insegnamento di queste alle scienze teologiche, e a gloria della fede.

Ora queste condizioni non escludono certamente i nuovi lumi, che l'ingegno e la riflessione possano recare sopra i problemi filosofici, ma escludono a buon conto la presunzione di creare opinioni nuove, e la precipitazione in abbracciarle create da altri. — Presunzione e precipitazione suonano infatti quanto sarebbe a dire un procedere irragionevole, epperò antifilosofico ; sicchè lo escluderlo è pregio della filosofia.

Ma per segnare un confine facile a discernersi, oltre al quale ognuno teme di cadere, l'uno o l'altro de' due vizi, bisognava che il *Ratio studiorum* o prescrivesse un sistema preciso da starvi legati *ex professo*, o desse un qualsiasi criterio delle novità riprovevoli. — Il primo partito sarebbe stato irragionevole, antifilosofico, poichè lo stesso, che discerne fra loro i sistemi cattolici di filosofia, essendo la parte più desiderabile, l'amore di stabile certezza, che è quella che il filosofo ricerca, gli vieta di pegginarsi ad alcun sistema esclusivo. Restava dunque, che si tenesse più largo il campo, in cui la filosofia potesse spaziare, e solo vietando le novità pericolose, di cui si indicasse un carattere sufficiente a svegliarne il sospetto.

Ma si aveva egli a derivarlo questo carattere *ab intrinseco* ? dall'intimità del difetto delle opinioni possibili a sorgere nelle scuole ? — L'impresa sarebbe assurda.

Dunque *ab extrinseco* ; nè poteva esser altro fuorchè il difetto di autorità, che esse avrebbero avuto rispetto alle altre, presso il comune de' dottori cattolici.

Con ciò la Compagnia lasciava che le opinioni novelle si dibatessero, si discutessero in quell'amplissimo campo che loro è concesso dalla fede cattolica. — Restava disposta a modificare le sue prime, già ereditate dalle antiche università, le forme l'ingegno umano, e l'istinto della Chiesa avrebbero condotto i savj a modificare le loro.

Per questa guisa essa provvedeva alla maggior utilità de' suoi servigi nella cristianità, camminando più fuori delle dispute scolastiche ( le quali anche ad oggi questa cautela furon pur tante ), e porgendo sempre per base alle facoltà superiori i principj filosofici più universalmente consentiti.

Nè tuttavia per voler fermare il suo insegnamento sopra le dottrine più comuni essa inceppava l'ingegno de' suoi proprii soggetti, sicchè loro fosse vietato di n

deve procedere con la massima sicurezza, e conformità rispetto alle dottrine comuni; ed altro è il privato opinare; ed altro il pubblicare come privato filosofo o teologo i proprii concetti.

Il proprio giudizio è sempre stato libero nella Compagnia, sol che non isconcertasse l'armonia del comune operare, nè offendesse la carità; e sebbene il pubblicarlo in istampa soggiacesse a maggiori cautele, pel dovuto riguardo alle dottrine altrui, la Compagnia però ha sempre concesso, che ognuno de' suoi dottori il facesse senza ostare alla diversità delle opinioni fra loro, salva al possibile l'uniformità nelle scuole.

Sotto questo sistema intanto sorse pure il Suarez; la cui metafisica presa dal Vico a meditare un anno intiero fu a quella sua mente stimolo a sublimi specolazioni, e pascolo e direzione da sostenervela.

La metafisica del Suarez fu il primo avviamento alla indipendenza delle scuole dal peripateticismo; la via, ch'egli apriva condusse fuori delle contese tra nominali e reali, a ripigliare da capo le serie delle idee, onde si svolge l'idea prima.

Ciò non di meno, finchè le università mantennero per base della filosofia l'autorità di Aristotile, l'insegnamento pubblico della Compagnia verteva sopra il testo e la dottrina di lui. Si proseguì anzi a commentarlo, e ora che la Francia lo rimette in luce e lo volgarizza unitamente a Platone (*V. Journal des Débats 27 janvier 1845*) potrà per avventura tornare in pregio, fra gli altri lavori di simil fatta, quello del P. Silvestro Mauri, celebre un tempo per pari profondità e chiarezza; come anche il corso de' Conimbricesi, stimato tuttavia ai dì nostri, che fu il frutto di una delle prime università consegnate alle mani della Compagnia.

Se non che lo studio del Suarez rallentò bel bello i vincoli, che tenevano i professori legati alla parola dello Stagirita. E quando appunto il Vico entrò a studiare filosofia nelle nostre scuole era giunta un'epoca di transizione, in cui divisi in parti pressochè uguali i dottori di diversa sentenza, gli avvenne d'incontrare successivamente tra i suoi maestri, prima un puro Aristotelico, poi un moderato Platonico, dal quale fu indirizzato a leggere il Suarez.

Così le nostre scuole anch'esse non lasciarono di partecipare alla fluttuazione al progresso delle altre, e di giovare alla filosofia.

All'uso di questa scienza concorrono varie facoltà, le quali di rado si incontrano a darsi la mano nel lavoro del medesimo individuo. — La più comune è la sottigliezza, la quale disgiunta dall'inventiva e dal discernimento sintetico si smarrisce o nell'analisi, or nelle remotissime conseguenze d'un principio dato. Non è meraviglia che anche nella Compagnia questa sorta di filosofia sia stata comune.

Tocca alle menti più vasti a giovarsi di quelle analisi, di quelle sottilissime distinzioni, in quanto sono reali e complete, affine di collegarle dialetticamente. Ora il bisogno di questo lavoro dialettico facendosi sentire maggiormente nelle questioni filosofiche, le quali si riferiscono ai dogmi di fede, ovvero alla morale cristiana, era naturale ad accadere che in una Compagnia di Sacerdoti, impegnati al maggior servizio della Chiesa, i migliori filosofi applicassero la mente a' problemi teologici. I sistemi diversi del Suarez, del Vasquez, del Molina intorno all'accordo del libero arbitrio e della grazia sono saggi diversi di lavoro sintetico tra le più remote conseguenze di due verità filosofiche da ricongiungersi sotto l'idea ferma del dogma cattolico. — Il trattato *Del Bene* del P. Pallavicini è un saggio di accordo dialettico tra la morale cristiana e i principj di natura.

Ma sopra la facoltà conciliatrice, che è necessaria agli studi filosofici, si concepisce il genio inventore, come quello, che si alza a nuove idee, e scuopre nuove vie al vero. In questo genio presumono naturalmente gli eterodossi, i quali non possono

to raccogliere il vero in quel punto, dal quale si trovano disposti a partirlo. L'ingegno creatore in filosofia sarebbe, a mio parere, la facoltà di alzarsi a cogliere sotto un punto di vista superiore, a conciliare sotto un principio comune maggior numero di sistemi, la maggior varietà di aspetti, sotto cui le cose siano state fin allora considerate. Ma questa sorta di invenzione è strettamente legata anche a rispettare due termini inviolabili, la rivelazione da un canto, dall'altro le opinioni più comuni tra i filosofi d'ogni tempo, e il valor relativo di ogni sistema avuto comunemente per assurdo. In una parola: — questa sorta di invenzione non è altro che un grado più perfetto di sintesi. — Ora così intesa, com'essa trova il suo esercizio nelle altre scuole cattoliche, così nelle scuole della Compagnia, dove l'obbligo di non offendere le opinioni comuni, non esclude la facoltà di conciliare quelle che abbiano apparenza di contrarie, ma anzi a ciò stesso condusse appunto i Testi mentovati, rispetto ai problemi agitati ai tempi loro.

E questa dipendenza delle menti ancor più sublimi dalle idee, che regnano in quella loro età, è altresì da considerarsi quando vogliam discorrere del valore d'alcun filosofo. La reazione istessa con che taluno si sarà alzato a combattere le opinioni vittoriose, può aversi per effetto cagionato dall'eccessiva loro preponderanza, giunta a invocare la ragione a ripigliar la vendetta dell'opinione opposta, i cui argomenti battuti dalla sola autorità, sussistevano insoluti, e nell'intera loro forza.

Dal quale andamento una stessa è la legge nel mondo intellettuale, che nel mondo politico. — Un'opinione, un sistema prevale per libero assenso delle menti, finché ne vedono discendere conseguenze conformi alla ragione. — Poi si trova stabilito che prevale per autorità; l'autorità la spinge a conseguenze ulteriori. — Ma se la ragione cessa d'esserne soddisfatta, si ricorda dell'opinione e del sistema opposto, deplora violati i diritti, e ritoglie a farli valere; e varranno per quanto tempo per seguirne alcun bene, finché per farsi anche da questa parte troppo cammino con danno della libertà e della logica, gli spiriti si rivolgono di nuovo alla parte abbandonata.

Allora se rimane memoria degli errori commessi nei due estremi si giunge a trovare un temperamento, che ammetta il libero svolgersi d'ogni opinione, e le tiene in equilibrio. Il quale stato dopo recati i suoi frutti farà luogo anch'esso a un nuovo periodo, non meno felice ne' suoi principii, nè più sicuro tuttavia dal pericolo d'essere condotto a tal esagerazione, che provochi le menti a volersi regger di nuovo sopra idee già prima abbandonate.

Nè quando un'intera generazione corre dietro ad un sistema è guari più possibile ai contemporanei il dissentirvi, di quello che sia possibile all'individuo l'astenersi dal dedurre la conseguenza di due premesse, ch'egli tiene per vere.

In quel trascinamento fa molto uno spirito forte, se pur vale a ricordare la passione i diritti dell'opinione dimenticata.

Il farla valere per nuova, il risuscitarla spogliando dell'impero quella, che regna, non è pur senza pregio di mente vigorosa. Ma il fatto dimostra, che ciò non accade tanto per valor d'ingegno, quanto per l'evidenza degli assurdi dominanti, e l'isdegno di passione. E la simpatia, che i novatori felici voglion trovare nel volgo, sta in ciò che quando essi cominciarono a parlare, ben molti già pensavano, e sentivano in essi; nè essi sono per avventura migliori logici, o più acuti metafisici, ma più diti ed eloquenti interpreti del sentir comune.

Vediamo adunque se i filosofi della Compagnia lasciarono fra le idee dominanti di ricordare la libertà delle opinioni. — Vediamo se all'epoca del tirannico predominio d'un'opinione esagerata non abbiano levata la voce.

Mi pare un fatto, che può esprimersi in due parole: la Compagnia

spollica.

Un altro fatto si è che col proporsi per criterio delle opinioni il comun sentire de' Dottori cattolici si preservò quanto era possibile dal pericolo di correre alle esagerazioni, o di lasciarsi trascinare, perchè queste non possono mai dirsi così comuni che non si mostrino recenti e contraddette dai savi.

Ma se la Compagnia ha questi meriti non è dunque da domandarle perchè non abbia avuto un filosofo novatore. — Essa ha fatto meglio, quando ha procacciato di prevenire il predominio di opinioni esclusive.

Ma qual' occasione di salutare riforma ha essa perduta? Suarez preparò quella ch' era a desiderarsi nel suo secolo.

Più tardi essa andava d' accordo con le migliori menti, che splendessero nella Chiesa, quando si svolse un germe di scetticismo, quale riforma si voleva? Esso non era per avventura che un' esagerazione del principio, che aveva abbattuto l' autorità di Aristotile; era dunque a combattersi col principio d' autorità? No, ma col far valere i diritti della ragione ne' suoi naturali confini. Ora non è questo l' assunto, in vista del quale i Gesuiti sostennero sì lunga e forte lotta contro i filosofi del secolo XVIII? Non fu questo medesimo il principio che il P. Guénard proclamava sì bene nell' Accademia di Parigi, da riportarne il premio?

Ma che merito ha la Compagnia in questa lotta se non riportò la vittoria? Il trionfo dell' incredulità non prova forse che la filosofia veniva meno fra le mani de' Gesuiti?

Quest' obbiezione starebbe se gli scettici, gli increduli, e i così detti filosofi di quel tempo avessero combattuto al modo degli antichi scolastici con le armi solo della logica; ma l' epicureismo regnante avvalorava lo scetticismo, — e quando questo volle ad ogni costo venire alle sue conseguenze diè mano ad armi niente filosofiche per distruggere prima la Compagnia, e poi ogni altro ostacolo.

Ora se questo fatto non prova che la filosofia dei Gesuiti fosse abbastanza rigida, rosa, certo vale a dimostrare che la ragione falliva pur troppo alla causa de' suoi avversarii.

Ed al presente, che vuoi da noi? Se alcuno de' nostri ha levato la voce contro qualche sistema che prenunziasse conseguenze dannose alla fede, li accusi di indiscrezione. Se ti pare che il panteismo minacci di inondare, tu conti per niente la cura ch' essi prendono di confutarlo fin ne' trattati elementari di filosofia, e con volgari dialettichetti, conforme loro sembra richiedersi dal bisogno dei loro allievi. Vuoi dunque avere la filosofia per un affare tuo personale? Certo nè tu, nè noi. Quelli fra i Gesuiti che videro le tue opinioni andar d' accordo co' principii loro e della Chiesa, furono liberi di applaudirti, e lo fecero col dovuto rispetto alla tua indipendenza, non con adulazione, ma con efficace cura di procacciarti lettori e seguaci. — E tu pure, non ne dubito, ami di lasciar libero, chiunque rispettando la tua persona e le tue intenzioni, non si dia ancora intieramente pel tuo sistema, finchè gli paian buoni i fondamenti di qualunque altro.

Chi avesse voluto apprezzare il valore della tua filosofia da alcun giudizio preconcipito in riguardo alla tua persona, non sarebbe proceduto da filosofo certamente. — Ma nè pur, quell'ingiuria, (Proleg. p. 203, 204 che forse non ti venne da altro Gesuita fuorchè da tale, che tu ci vuoi affliggiare pel solo confondersi nella tua menzogna il gesuitismo con tutto ciò che è assurdo ed odioso), nè pur quell'ingiuria personale e privata sarebbe mai da porsi per te fra le ragioni filosofiche del tuo sistema, o de' l' universale nostra depravazione come fatti inetti a discernere omai il buono dal reo.

Per esser giusto ridurrei la questione del nostro poter o no esistere a questo modo a solo cercare, se al modo, che la Compagnia coltivò pel passato la filosofia,

*Pellico.*

Lo crederei di aver recati bastanti argomenti per l' affermativa — ma per  
che io mi permetta di pronunziare la mia conclusione voglio, che esaminiamo il  
della decadenza degli studi sì notevole secondo alcuni, all' epoca, in cui venne  
dere la Compagnia medesima, e cercare fino a qual punto vi abbia essa attivato  
o passivamente partecipato.

## DECADENZA DEGLI STUDI NEL SECOLO XVIII.

Gli studi erano sotto varii aspetti in decadenza prima della soppressione dei  
suits, e nella loro Compagnia medesima. — Dunque o essi, i Gesuiti, sono la causa  
ne di quella decadenza, o certo non valgono a sostenere e a dirigere gli studi.  
Così discorre taluno; or dunque io voglio che determiniamo il fatto, e riconosciamo  
prima per quali aspetti si dimostrasse questa decadenza, e per quali no.

Sotto l' aspetto delle scienze sperimentali o delle scienze esatte, no. Queste  
gredivano e dentro e fuori della Compagnia.

Dal canto della filosofia, lo scetticismo, poi il sensismo potevano invadere le  
ti d' una classe di pensatori, ma la Compagnia fu soppressa nell' atto, che difendeva  
le buone dottrine.

Sì, era decaduta per qualche parte la classica letteratura; — e, all' altro  
estremo degli studi, la teologia passava dall' antica gravità e sodezza ad una forma  
discussione più appoggiata alla ragion naturale, che non all' autorità delle sacre  
ture e della tradizione de' Padri.

Or bene la Compagnia partecipò anch' essa col suo secolo a questo difetto?

Prima rispetto agli studi classici si osserva, che gli oratori e i letterati Gesuiti  
trovarono assai inferiori ai loro antichi maestri.

Rispetto poi alle scienze teologiche si reca per misura del suo decadimento  
storia del popolo di Dio del Berruyer, la quale, per quanto sia stata dall' autore  
suoi soci massimamente in Francia e in Roma riprovata, rimasta però qual monumento  
degli studi di un professore, attesterebbe, che lo spirito della sua scuola tendeva  
a considerare ed a presentare la Religione sotto una forma troppo nuova ed un

Cerchiamo ora dunque le cagioni e la misura di questa comune decadenza della  
Compagnia e del suo secolo rispetto agli studi letterarii e alla teologia.

E scorriamo del danno, che fosse a deplorarsi nella letteratura primieramente.

Una cagione di esso io la scorgerei tosto nel propagarsi e nel progredire che  
cevano le scienze matematiche e lo studio de' fenomeni fisici.

Lo studio più o meno superficiale della natura è lungi dal nuocere alle grazie  
un' immaginazione colta, o dallo smorzare l' eloquenza del cuore. La letteratura  
vivendosi all' arte di esprimere il bello ideale nella forma del pensiero e degli affetti  
lo studio delle bellezze, della magnificenza, del corso così ordinato e stupendo del  
st' universo, sarà sempre caro ai letterati, e fornirà alla lor fantasia ed al loro  
sommo tipo che abbiano a ritrarre nel vestire le proprie creazioni.

Ma, se mal non avviso, non è così del primato assoluto ed esclusivo delle  
matiche: non è così dello studio sperimentale, analitico, scientifico, il quale sc  
notomizza la natura, come lo scalpello fa sopra un cadavere per ricostruirla qu  
moto con niente più, che un  $A + B = X$ .

Questa maniera di applicare la mente alla realtà delle cose, e alle intime  
onde si reggono, rimuove l' esercizio della fantasia, sospende la ricerca del bello



preciso, lo stile nell'insegnamento più lontano da ogni figura, più scevro da ogni passione, tanto la scienza procederà più sicura nella sua via.

Se giovi alla civiltà il sacrificare a maggior lume ed esattezza di scienze alcuna grazia di lettere, — quest'è un problema, che sollecita ogni dì più seriamente la sua soluzione presso i moralisti.

Se questo inaridire del cuore e dello stile, se questa trascuratezza di forme, se questo culto della mente ad una verità che pure veste uno splendor tanto più divino quanto è più sgombra d'ornamenti stranieri, sia assolutamente un decadere dell'umanità, o anzi un progresso, — se sia il più nobile scopo degli studi, od una nuova sorta di barbarie, io certo non lo so dire; — e al più oserei pensare, che se in questa sorta di dubbi è lasciata al discernimento ed all'arbitrio umano qualche via da seguire al vero, questa ha da essere una lunga esperienza di più e più nazioni colte, — non già l'argomento *ab intrinseco* od *a priori*: — e che la nazione, la quale voglia procedere più sicura in quest'esperienza, deve al possibile ravvicinare i due estremi e fermarli verso i ponti che la natura dello spirito umano sembra loro assegnare, procacciando all'età della fantasia e degli affetti la migliore coltura letteraria, e all'età della ragione e degli interessi la via più larga a scegliere tra le diverse scienze e arti e i possibili oggetti, cui voglia utilmente proporsi l'attività umana, procacciando intorno ad ogni ramo dello scibile una direzione sicura per via dell'insegnamento scientifico.

Le circostanze di una nazione così illuminata la condurranno a scorgere il vantaggio, ch'essa abbia a cercare or più nell'arti, ora nel traffico, e quanta parte dei suoi ingegni voglia consacrare al culto delle scienze o del bello letterario.

Ma prima d'allora il problema ridotto a cercare il danno comparativo, che si fa nel favorire le scienze esatte o sperimentali o le aride ricerche ideologiche con lo scapito delle lettere o viceversa, non mi parrebbe, che uno di que' temi di retorica dov'è maggior vaghezza di antitesi, che non precisione ne' termini, o savio riguardo al mondo reale.

Ora però aveva essa mai la Compagnia recato alcun intoppo a questa naturale direzione della società nella via d'ogni coltura, per cui educasse prima la gioventù alle lettere classiche, poi le aprisse l'adito alle varie scienze esatte o razionali, e che hanno da guidare la vita operativa e civile?

Dal canto suo l'insegnamento letterario non avea mutato di metodo; — finché alla retorica tutto era ne' suoi collegi perpetuo esercizio di grammatica e di eloquenza nell'imitazione della classica antichità latina e greca.

L'insegnamento filosofico non lo poteva stendere oltre a quel tanto; che fosse base ed introduzione alle facoltà superiori; — la fisica e le matematiche si riducevano ai necessari elementi. — Bensì attendevano specialmente alle matematiche ed alla fisica in alcuni corsi speciali, e ancora nelle università straniere, quelli fra gli studenti gesuiti che vi avessero più rara disposizione; i più eccellenti de' quali si spandevano poi per la maggior parte nella Cina, e gli altri negli osservatorî d'Europa. Cosicchè erano lungi tuttavia dall'influire immediatamente sopra la gioventù delle scuole, — nè potevano altro fuorchè con l'esempio e con la gloria dei loro successi ispirare agli studiosi un certo desiderio di seguirli per la medesima via, scemare agli occhi di molti il prestigio che pareva per lo innanzi chiamar tutti gli allori sul capo dei poeti o degli oratori, eccitare insomma la generazione crescente ad entrare in una carriera di studi feconda di maravigliose ed utili scoperte.

Non vedo un maggior guasto, — nè sarà stato maggiore dal canto degli scienziati di diverso istituto, e delle università. — Fu un effetto inevitabile d'una causa innocente, — e quella causa era impossibile a rimuoversi.

prosperità della repubblica letteraria. — Questa era cresciuta grazie al perfezionamento delle lingue nazionali giunte a riprodurre degne imitazioni de' poeti e degli oratori antichi.

Allora fu naturale un certo entusiasmo in favore della propria gloria. La letteratura nazionale invaghita e gelosa dell'esser suo proprio, potè esser meno sollecita de' modelli antichi, che non de' sommi creati da sè. Ora, se mal non mi appongo, soli antichi sono tipi universali e perpetui; i classici nazionali, per ciò stesso, son nazionali portano una forma più esclusiva e ristretta alle circostanze e all'indole della nazione. — Quel che è, che a mantenersi questa seconda sempre di opere letterarie degne di sè, deve accoppiare lo studio dei proprii classici con quello degli antichi in quella proporzione che il pittore mantiene tra lo studio de' modelli artefatti e quella della natura e del bello ideale. — Violata questa proporzione prevale o il pedantismo nazionale, niente meno miserabile che il pedantismo classico, — ovvero la presunzione di uguagliarsi, grazie alla facilità e perfezione della lingua moderna, i maestri di quella, senza attingere com'essi l'idea del bello letterario alla sua forma primitiva.

La realtà di questi difetti nella letteratura del secolo XVIII mi sembra poter riferire alla cagione, ch'io accenno. — E qui confesso, che l'influenza di questa tendenza a operare altresì sopra gli studi de' Gesuiti. Benchè mai non abbiano partecipato quel disprezzo per la letteratura greca e latina, che era forse il principal vizio letterario dell'età trascorsa; ed abbiano meritato d'essere tenuti pur troppo retroguardi e tenaci dell'antichità, anch'essi però s'invaghirono de' classici nazionali, e senza no l'immenso vantaggio, che torna alle menti dal libero uso d'una lingua vivente, e furono per avventura più solleciti di giovare con quella al loro Apostolato, che al culto del bello classico.

Certo è che formata da' classici moderni la lingua nazionale, questa favorì di misura l'attività dello spirito, e il corso delle idee. — Una lingua semplice e solida divenne maneggevole strumento ad una prosa piana, e ad un discorso superficiale. Una lingua più armoniosa ed elegante suscitò i verseggiatori. Ma la condizione de' tempi volle, che le idee fornite all'uso della prima fossero semi di discussione per i ragionatori; e alla seconda mancassero per così dire gli oggetti da alimentarsi, sicchè le rimanesse o a struggersi in canti, o a mendicare le idee dai vicini.

Ora questa condizione de' due popoli, de' quali è naturale che vogliamo qui scorrere, fu troppo indipendente dal volere della Compagnia, da poterla incolpare. Del francesismo, la gran piaga della lingua italiana nello scorso secolo, non credo che alcuno voglia incolparne la Compagnia. La poca attività che gli Italiani spiegarono a que' tempi fuori della Accademia procedeva in parte dall'indole naturale, che gli affeziona agli studi ameni, e in parte dalle circostanze politiche. Dall'altro lato lo spirito di scetticismo e di epicureismo, che diffondendosi nelle classi civili s'incorporava nella letteratura francese, e indi si sparse anche fra l'ozio italiano, era stato quello della Compagnia, sì poco logicamente dedotto da quello, ch'essa aveva potuto insinuare ai tempi del maggior suo credito, che anzi ebbe principio nelle sue dispute, ch'essa combatteva, nella confusione di idee, che quelle produssero intorno all'autorità, ai dogmi, alle speranze eterne, alla moralità degli atti, tutte cose ch'ella predicava tutt'al più nelle sue polemiche giusta la dottrina ortodossa.

Bensi per dover essa discendere sul campo dove ardeva il conflitto, per moltiplicare le armi ed i colpi con ogni genere di scritture in lingua volgare, dovette esser meno sollecita del bello, che non del vero, meno gelosa del classico decoro, che delle forme volute dal gusto regnante, o da una stringente logica.

sersi meno sviato dalle tradizioni della buona scuola, che non quello degli avversari.

Questi prevalgono in opere d'immaginazione, ma come astri erranti e di infasto augurio non giovan di guida o di modello, trascinano a smarrire ogni regola. Tratto a dover discutere una questione qualsiasi, il loro stile ha bisogno d'avvilupparsi ne' sofismi, o di avvilirsi col linguaggio dello sdegno, del sarcasmo o dell'insolenza.

Per lo contrario la buona logica, e il santo affetto, che animò i difensori della religione, e fra questi i Gesuiti diedero ancora rispetto all'arte alcun pregio alla sacra Oratoria. E se di quel tempo si possono ancora menzionare in Francia i PP. Neveuville e Beauregard con alcuni altri, come degni di essere associati ai moderni ristoratori dell'eloquenza nazionale, gli Italiani ricordano altresì coi PP. Tornielli, Venini e Pellegrini parecchi predicatori non dispregevoli, e preferiti alla maggior parte de' predicatori italiani de' secoli precedenti.

Se non che ad attestare lo stato della buona letteratura fra i Gesuiti nel momento in cui veniva soppressa la lor Compagnia, mi pare, che per quanto soggiacessero in questa o in quella parte all'influenza del loro secolo, non potea però aversi per sì lontana dalle tracce de' buoni Maestri quella scuola, che nella sola provincia romana perduto da pochi giorni un Lagomarsini, un Noceti, un Carpani, un Roti non aveva ancora fra i suoi tali cultori della classica antichità, quali i Lanzi, i Morcelli, Ignazio De Rossi, Mazzolari, Cunich, Marotti, Zamagna, Cordara ecc. Mi appello sopra ciò al testimonio di un autore non sospetto Filippo Bonamici, che ne' suoi scritti professava contro noi un odio, che ha del fanatico. Pure là dove parla del Lagomarsini sono a nostro proposito da notare le seguenti parole: *Hieronymus Lagomarsinius latini sermonis et amantissimus et peritissimus, eiusque homo Societatis, quae latinarum literarum fugientem iam gloriam omni scriptorum genere retinere quodammodo conatur*: nel libro de claris liter. pontificiar. scriptoribus. E ciò basti per avviso a chi non ha molto volle anche nel latino appuntare la Compagnia.

Quanto poi al decadere, che facessero a que' tempi gli studi teologici, non so se possa legittimamente argomentarsi dalla forma, sotto cui alcuno si sia proposto a presentare la verità divina agli occhi dell'umana ragione.

Ogni volta, che occorre ad una generazione di entrare per una via, sono alcuni ingegni, che si spingono oltre misura; il cui fallo segna ai più savi il termine, a quale si debbono fermare. — Ora appunto il fallo del Berroyer fu così tutto di lui solo, che in tutta la Compagnia, nè fra i suoi colleghi, nè fra i suoi discepoli non trovò chi levasse la voce in altra espressione fuorchè di condanna, — e di fatto se egli aveva voluto che la sua storia uscisse alla luce, (mentre è chi dice che altri gli l'abbia stampata senza il suo consentimento) non avea per anco potuto sperarne l'approvazione dai Revisori del suo Ordine.

Escludiamo adunque questo esempio solito a citarsi; restano forse a biasimare coloro, che presero a disputare di religione con quel genere di argomenti, e in quel stile, di cui i novelli filosofi davan la legge?

Le lunghe dispute de' giansenisti sopra il senso della S. Scrittura, la disciplina e sopra i testi de' SS. Padri, sopra l'autorità della Chiesa aveano stancato il secolo — e già inclinato a non creder per anco alla propria ragione, come avrebbe esso accolto per buona contro il suo scetticismo l'autorità divina od ecclesiastica?

La Teologia tornava ad essere quella ch'essa era tra le mani di S. Giustino d'Atenagora, e de' primi Dottori che scrissero contro i filosofi gentili (1). — Non d

(1) I corsi però recenti di Goner, del Marin, del Monschein, del Widmann, del Radlhamer, di Gautier, dei Virochburgesi ecc. mantenevano ancora il metodo e la gloria antica.



avea lasciato irruginire nella Chiesa quelle armi, che avean fatto la prima sua gloria.

Non prendo però a giustificare più a lungo il metodo o la forma che questi teologi adottarono secondo le circostanze, e secondo lo scopo lor proprio. — Ma la superficialità e la leggerezza della maggior parte degli avversarii parve ridur le discussioni religiose ad un ragionare meno scientifico o profondo, valga a dar retto degli studi teologici, quali erano coltivati nelle scuole della Compagnia, il rimproverare quelle altre opere, le quali verso la medesima età, ebbe occasione di produrre per altre necessità della Chiesa.

Lasciamo stare l'erudizione in Gius canonico e in ogni diritto positivo racconciati ne' trattati di Teologia Morale di quegli ultimi tempi, come sarebbe in quelli di P. La Croix, del Mazzotta, del Catalani, del Biner, Reuter, Viva ecc.

Il P. Azevedo ebbe la mano in tutte le opere pubblicate da Benedetto XIV come anche il P. Fabio Danzetta.

Zaccaria fu scelto da Pio VI, per presidente dell'Accademia ecclesiastica di Roma, e per professore alla Sapienza e dato per Maestro, se così m'è lecito dirlo, dal Cardinal Pacca per abilitarlo alla Nunziatura in Germania al tratto del Reno. Fu salda, Bonòla, Mozzarelli, Faure, Muzzani, Brignole, Noghera, de Iturriaga ed han dato prova in varie Dissertazioni speciali del loro valore nelle parti più recondite della sacra Scienza.

Il Barruel rivelava nella sua storia le trame massoniche del Giacobinismo, e i Mozzi le scismatiche di Utrecht, e il Gusta le nuove mene del giansenismo originarie e continuate da quelle di Portoreale.

Arevalo già sopra menzionato per editore de' poeti cristiani, lavorò parimente l'edizione di S. Isidoro.

Feller, che riesce a farsi leggere dai dilettanti della moderna filosofia, è per primo ad armarsi di tutto punto con gli argomenti proprii della scuola contro il medio-Efebronio.

Si sa dalle lettere di Voltaire, quanto lo inquietassero le opere scrittegli contro dal Nonnotte.

Quel medesimo Berthier che fa da filosofo giornalista nelle memorie di Trévoux commenta i Salmi ed Isaia.

E oltre alle varie versioni del nuovo Testamento date in lingua volgare da noi nostri, oltre alle Lezioni di sacra Scrittura di Quirico Rossi, del Barotti, del Gualdo, del Granelli, del Nicolai ecc. a dimostrare la perfezione degli Studi Biblici allora si manteneva ne' nostri collegii restano le Versioni letterali fatte sul sacro testo dal P. Biel, e dal P. Weithenaver ed i trattati di critica sacra e di Ermeneutica di l'Alter, dell'Engstler, del Widenhofer, del Ries, Khell, Vogt, Weissebach ecc.

Che è dunque a conchiudersi dal fatto esposto fin qui?

Io mi permetterei di conchiudere in questi termini:

1.° Che la decadenza degli studi, in quanto ebbe di realtà, rispetto al bisogno delle nazioni moderne, si riferisce a tali cagioni, cui la Compagnia meno che non potè partecipare.

2. Che alla decadenza degli studi letterari partecipò, il meno che fu possibile.

3. Che la decadenza della Teologia fu più apparente rispetto alla forma che prese maggior corso, ma non fu reale nè quanto a' metodi suoi proprii, nè quanto alla dottrina.

Al che sarei per aggiungere, che se la sfera dei buoni studi volge sopra due cardini del sommo vero cioè e del sommo bello — una società, la quale per

# **OBEDIENZA CIECA E VALOR INDIVIDUALE**

## **E COME**

### **AL POTER MENO IN OPERE**

#### **SUPPLISCA IL PATIR PIÙ.**

Abbiam tenuto dietro ai principî e all'operare della Compagnia intorno a quei precipui oggetti, de' quali si vuole domandarle conto; e mi pare che la vedemmo procedere con pari discernimento de' suoi doveri e attività nell'adempirli.

È questo un procedere imposto a tutto insieme il gran corpo dalle intime molle sopra le quali è costituito? o dipende esso così da una mente superiore, che il membro non v'abbia del suo, fuorchè il secondare la direzione comune? o sotto la direzione cui soggiace il Gesuita, è egli luogo al proprio riflettere e volere di lui?

I ministeri della Compagnia sono di vario genere, e niuno ne scorgo che vada macchina o alla militare; ma sono per lo più morali o letterarii; tali, che richieggono esercizio spontaneo delle facoltà mentali, fervor d'affetto, maturità di consiglio, discernimento delle circostanze presenti all'atto, in una parola e prudenza e libertà di valore individuale.

In questi varii ministeri scopro di fatto, che altri riesce più facilmente, ed almeno secondo che è variamente fornito di attività sua spontanea, — e fra coloro che occupano con successo un medesimo ufficio, ognuno spiega un genio suo particolare, ognuno crea una sua impresa, ognuno lascia di sè un concetto di merito tutto suo.

Non solo è varietà di tempra, di forma, di creazioni tra i nostri autori in qualsiasi genere di letteratura sacra o profana; — non solo sono molti fra i nostri fisici e matematici che procedettero da sè a nuove indagini, — non solo tra i filosofi od teologi sono liberamente disputati intorno alle materie opinabili sistemi diversi, — ma più, nella vita attiva ogni missionario, ancorchè non cessi di essere legato al corpo della Compagnia ed al suo superiore immediato, ha però da spiegare l'energia sua propria, — nè solo quella del soldato, che si slancia nella zuffa per comando del capitano, ma quella del padre, del legislatore, del mediatore de' popoli, l'energia d'un zelo illuminato, che procede con pari consiglio e attuosità.

Che è dunque a credere di quell'obbedienza, onde si dice smorzata in seno al Gesuita la ragione e la facoltà di esser sè, e di operare per proprio suo valore?

O quest'obbedienza nostra non è dunque al tutto sì passiva, sì cieca, — o, per quanto essa sia, non è punto sì fatale all'individuo, sì contro ai diritti della società che le tolga i cittadini per farne automi.

Eppure, si ripiglia, la regola di una siffatta obbedienza intiera, perpetua, di opera, di volontà, di giudizio sta nell'istituto gesuitico per base fondamentale. — E io aggiungo, non solo è scritta nell'istituto, ma la pratichiamo ancora abbastanza fedelmente da meritarne l'accusa come di uomini che l'obbedienza ha tramutati e tolti a sè stessi.

Ma se è così, — se una regola speciale di obbedienza è data ad un ordine religioso, e quell'ordine osserva la regola data, che male è da dirne?

Il male sarebbe se tralignassimo dal nostro istituto, o col rallentare la pratica dell'obbedienza voluta dalla regola, o coll'obbedire oltre a ciò che la regola imponga.

sa comunicherebbe nella stessa via. — E si sa la misura della moderata civiltà opposta a quella, che la Chiesa mantiene come dottrina soprannaturale.

Non sarebb' egli più savio per avventura l' ammettere la regola per buona lodevole il perpetuo impegno de' Gesuiti nell'osservarla, — e intanto notare come to naturale ad avvenire, che nè anche per questa via l' umana natura vada esente ogni imperfezione ?

Dammi un sistema di educazione qualunque privata, pubblica, civile, religiosa, dove sotto il miglior temperamento di obbedienza e di libera attività, la riuscita di individuo risponda ne' fatti all' equilibrio stabilito ne' principî: e finchè tu non puoi avrò il medesimo diritto che ti prendi verso di noi, di argomentare contro il sistema che tu fosti per proporre, secondo che sull' animo degli allievi presi individualmente riuscirà a prevalere o il principio di autorità, o quello di libertà con direzione del temperamento voluto.

A giudicare d' un sistema di educazione religiosa, che già è in opera da tanti secoli, conviene considerarlo per due rispetti, nei principî, e nei frutti. Ne' principî, cercando se siano gli evangelici, riconosciuti per tali dalla Chiesa e temperati quod il discernimento umano può farne stima in quella proporzione, che conducano al proposto fine, che specialmente si intende dall' Istituto. Ne' frutti, cercando se per loro corrispondano al fine proposto, e per tali siano graditi dalla Chiesa, al cui servizio devon produrre.

Ora nell' istituto nostro non solo il principio di perfetta obbedienza è riconosciuto dalla Chiesa per evangelico, e stretto allo scopo nostro di educarci a somiglianza del Salvatore *qui cum in forma, Dei esset, semetipsum exinanivit formam accipiens, — factus obediens usque ad mortem crucis* ; — ma questo vi è temperato da tutti quegli altri principî di generosità e di prudenza, che son diretti a formare uomini riflessivi, operosi, atti ad intraprender qualunque difficil cosa occorra a gloria di Dio, ed a reggere con discernimento e vigore quella sfera di apostolato che loro tocchi.

Il novizio dapprima non è scelto fra quelle tempre di animo sì molli e privi di ardore, che meglio riescano all' obbedire passivo, e ad imitare ciecamente le altrui maniere. Fin nel proprio petto se gli ricerca un elemento non volgare di attuosità di vigore nativo. — Una mente pronta a percepire o ad immaginare, una ragione diritta, un discernimento pratico, un cuor risoluto, un fare franco e disinvolto. Nè certo si ricercano queste doti per soffocarle, ma perchè esse sole promettono un fondo di valor individuale, che si richiede ne' varii uffizi di una vocazione apostolica.

Affine di correggere quindi gli istinti men nobili di svolgere la fecondità di natura ricca, ma forse lenta ed avara ; affine di dilatare la sfera delle idee e degli affetti, ed esercitare il discernimento, la parola, l' operare ne' casi pratici, il corso del noviziato conduce il giovane religioso a trattare spesso fuori di casa agli ospedali, alle carceri, a brevi pellegrinaggi, a catechismi, a piccoli saggi di missione. — Tra le mura stesse del suo ritiro è più frequente il suo usare liberamente co' fratelli il ragionare in pubblica conferenza, che non in privato trattenersi col superiore maestro.

Sant' Ignazio amò altresì di vedere nelle nostre case raccolti religiosi di diverse nazioni, pensando, che quell' affratellarsi d' uomini per patria tra sè stranieri, giovasciogliere a ciascuno la mente ed il cuore da quelle preoccupazioni locali che impediscono il giudizio e le maniere ; e questo vantaggio il giovane lo incontra fin dal noviziato, e più nel corso degli studi.

Aggiungi i viaggi sì frequenti fra noi, ora per ragione degli studi, ora per

— il cambiare frattanto di superiore, e il vedere, e il provare i diversi effetti dell'operare diverso di ciascheduno — il perpetuo comunicare per lettere co' lontani, e l'aver notizie dei buoni successi, o delle tribolazioni di que' nostri missionarii, che appunto sono in necessità di spiegare una virtù sciolta ed eroica.

Mi pare che con tanta parte dell'educazione tutta rivolta a formare uomini robusti per senno, e secondi in opere di zelo, non è più tanto a temere, che lo spirito di cieca imitazione e dipendenza sia per prevalere nella Compagnia. — Ma sì, come notò appunto sant' Ignazio nelle sue Costituzioni, era da aggiungervi lo studio dell'obbedienza e della reciproca stima, affinchè quanto ognuno dovea farsi più valente per merito individuale, altrettanto si stringesse per speciale impegno a far una cosa sola coi suoi fratelli, e per l'accordo delle volontà si avvalorasse a pro della Chiesa l'opera di tutti insieme.

Ma io vedo la difficoltà, che altri crede insuperabile nel conciliare un'ubbidienza perfetta, totale, con lo sviluppo della libertà e del discernimento proprio. Una certa misura d'obbedienza è necessaria, si dice, ma totale, assorbe intiera la libertà, — onde a proporzione del campo che vuole lasciarsi all'energia individuale tanto meno l'obbedienza dovrebbe essere stretta e rigorosa.

Rispondo, l'obbedienza come virtù dell'individuo, deriva la misura della sua necessità, dalla necessità in che ognuno può essere di supplire alla propria prudenza, con la prudenza de' maggiori; — di più l'obbedienza come virtù sociale e ordinatrice, deriva la sua misura dalle attinenze reciproche degli ufficii. Oud'è che l'ubbidienza allora è perfetta, quando ogni cittadino, ogni membro d'una comunità, limita la sua prudenza alle cose, cui presiede, e la sua obbedienza a quelle, in cui o soggiace, o il proprio consiglio non è sicuro.

Ora nella Compagnia di Gesù le cose non sono punto ordinate altrimenti.

I voleri de' superiori non discendono ad intricare le operazioni proprie degli uffizi de' subalterni. In questi ognuno deve recare i lumi della propria riflessione, ed esercitare il suo zelo con quella spontaneità, e vigore di atti, che conviene a chi dee nella sua sfera rappresentare la Divinità, e secondare i consigli e la bontà della sovrana Provvidenza.

Quindi è, che nelle cose che riguardano il proprio carico l'obbedienza non può guari andar sola, seguendo con cieco rispetto i cenni del superiore; ma ove questi paia suggerire un consiglio, che l'inferiore conscio delle circostanze non creda opportuno, deve conciliare il debito dell'obbedienza con quello della prudenza, mettendo sotto gli occhi del superiore le sue ragioni.

Bensì quand'egli ha comunicato al superiore i proprii lumi intorno al caso particolare — egli deve averlo per abbastanza illuminato, e star disposto ai suoi cenni, come di colui, che presiedendo ad una sfera più alta, e giudicando le cose con maggior imparzialità, può e dev'essere ascoltato più che non il proprio privato consiglio.

Quanti poi sono gli oggetti appartenenti all'individuo come suddito, altrettanti sono i rispetti per cui il religioso si fa obbediente.

Esso non ha la scelta degli impieghi — ma è giusto, che sia impiegato, secondo che pare al superiore doversi pel comune servizio, e secondo le abilità e le virtù, che gli sono conosciute, o in cui è bene che venga avvalorato.

Esso non ha la direzione della propria coscienza in quelle cose, in cui la fantasia, e l'amor proprio possono lasciar luogo all'illusione; e perchè nè men queste conoscerebbe, amerà di tener sempre l'anima sua aperta e docile tra le mani del suo padre.

Esso non uscirà dal corso della sua educazione finchè non abbia fatti gli studi

climazioni proprie, gioverà l'esser esercitato in mille minuzie a piegare senza diffidare il proprio giudizio, e a fare senza esitazione qualunque cosa, ove non sia evidente peccato.

Nè questa obbedienza pronta, precisa, filiale giova meno a formare un uomo forte, che a farlo docile.

L'obbedienza esercita alla fatica, alle privazioni, a vincere una timidità ereditaria, a correggere un difetto inavvertito, o a coltivare una facoltà, che si lasciava inaridire.

E in quanto è legge di prudenza nel governare sè stesso ed altrui, l'avvermena la mente a scorgere il pro ed il contra — e acquistata esperienza dalla pratica, e da' vantaggi che siano nell'obbedire — e fatto l'animo indifferente a ciò che piace o pare, per voler solo ciò, che ha ragione di miglior bene in ordine a' fini dell'Istituto, della Chiesa e di Dio; siccome l'obbedienza indirizza appunto il religioso a queste mire, a quest'indifferenza, a quest'esperienza pratica delle cose, così dal nuocere alla prudenza, a quella anzi conferisce per altrettanti modi. Così, nel testo evangelico, si congiungono nella vita del giovane religioso, quelle due virtù, *erat subditus, e proficiebat sapientia et gratia*.

Ma singolare nobiltà di pensiero e di affetti coltivasi dall'obbedienza religiosa, mentre essa non vuole, che l'uomo obbedisca all'uomo, ma nel superiore riconosca l'autorità partecipata da Dio, e a Dio solo si assoggetti. Il qual riguardo alla sovranità, donde ogni altro potere deriva, non tanto esagera i diritti del superiore, quanto sublima la condizione, e le mire del suddito, e senza sciogliere l'ordine delle attinenze di società, lo rende così indipendente dai riguardi umani, che tuttavia si piega senza avvilirsi.

Onde avviene che il cieco obbedire suppone tuttavia due lumi di sapienza; il primo per discernere se colui, che comanda ha l'autorità di comandare in quella materia, — il secondo, se ciò che comanda non sia evidentemente contrario alla legge divina.

E il sottomettersi ad ogni superiore in ciò che è di sua spettanza, e non torcendo offesa manifesta di Dio, non può quindi chiamarsi cieco, se non in quanto chiude gli occhi ad un investigare inquieto e superbo, e passa sopra alle ragioni immediate, perchè scorge abbastanza una ragione superiore.

E di fatto le ragioni immediate e proprie a determinare una cosa da farsi, debbono considerare, chi ha l'ufficio di reggere.

Il subalterno, quando si tratta di una risoluzione che lo riguarda nella sua qualità di subalterno, non ha bisogno di vederle; e ad operare saviamente e correttamente, basta eh'egli accetti il comando con la vista rivolta a colui, cui deve render conto di ogni atto suo, obbedendo alla volontà, che Dio gli manifesta per mezzo del superiore, che ne è stabilito l'interprete.

Così si avvera ciò che diceva sant'Ignazio, dove si tratta di obbedienza, non avervi a guardare alla prudenza. — Non sono esse sempre così distinte, che l'una non debba temperare l'altra; ma in molti casi il suddito, non essendo altro che suddito, deve intendere che la virtù del suo stato è la semplice sottomissione, e che questa è tanto più perfetta nel suo genere, quanto ha minore mescolanza di altra.

Il concerto armonico di tutte le virtù, che riduca ciascuna di esse a tal misura, in cui lasci luogo alle altre; quell'è la più compita perfezione. — Ma ciò non toglie che dove una virtù trova luogo a star sola, senza contrastare ai diritti d'alcun'altra, non sia bello il praticarla in tutta la sua perfezione propria e speciale. — Che questa cura appunto di spingere nelle varie circostanze dove sia possibile ogni virtù al sommo suo grado, è quello che compie nella vita il merito della vera discrezione.



Or concedi questa morale alla Compagnia di Gesù; e avremo al possibile superiori esercitati prima ad essere saviamente obbedienti, ed impegnati nell'esercizio de' loro carichi ad essere seriamente prudenti; impegnati a consultar essi e co' colleghi e con Dio, e da ogni parte donde lor possa giungere qualche lume, le ragioni pro e pel contro, che siano a considerarsi in una deliberazione, sicchè veramente il suddito possa aver in quella la più intiera fiducia.

Se il suddito è indirizzato a riverire negli ordini del superiore l'ordinazione di Dio, il superiore altresì è impegnato per istituto a non risolvere se non a norma de' principii della morale divina. Sicchè uno è il centro, cui l'uno e l'altro hanno fissato lo sguardo, il fonte supremo d'ogni lume e d'ogni virtù. Il che se predispone ad un mutuo accordo di mente e di cuore, toglie altresì e il dispotismo dell'impero, e la servilità della obbedienza, — e congiunge però sì bene i sudditi a chi li regge, come membra al capo, da formare per questo legame di reciproca confidenza un corpo solo, il quale si governa con pari prudenza di consiglio, e alacrità di atti.

Congiungiamo pertanto adesso la parte di prudenza propria e di valore individuale, che ogni Gesuita deve al possibile metter in opera nella sfera dell'ufficio qualsiasi, in cui ha qualche misura di autorità, più la parte di prudenza, cui egli conferisce ad illuminare ne' suoi superiori, quando loro comunica il modo suo d'intendere le occorrenze del suo impiego, più il partecipare che fa alla prudenza loro col lasciarsi guidare dal loro consiglio nelle cose, in cui può aversi per semplice suddito, e la Compagnia ti comparirà per avventura, come fa ad altri, per più forte in prudenza che non in fiacchita per l'obbedienza — e costituita appunto in quella forma, che dice la legione Romana, dove nè l'autorità o l'unità del comando stringeva di soverchio il voler personale del soldato, nè lo spontaneo eroismo di questo scemava la forza, che un gran corpo può derivare dalla armonia de' movimenti sotto un medesimo capo.

Fin qui però intesi io di ragionare giusta i principii dell'Istituto, del Vangelo della Chiesa. Il fatto si trova egli più o meno al disotto di quella perfezione? — Il fatto ti mostra forse che siamo troppo più obbedienti, che non valenti ad operare con libertà di spirito?

Mi perdonerai se qui non mi metto in dovere nè di combattere la tua sentenza, nè di accettarla. Nè l'un nè l'altro abbiamo i mezzi, o la missione di terminare questo giudizio. — Mi basta che il peggio delle nostre colpe si riduca a tal docilità, a tal fedeltà, che ci faccia inchinare verso la regola più difficile, che è pur l'ubbidienza, e obbediamo con piena fiducia ne' nostri superiori; e l'autorità dei superiori si temperata di bontà da farsi soverchiamente amare, non sia punto per l'amore indebolita.

Se questa veramente non è grandezza di merito, la quale in tutto risponda all'idea del nostro Istituto, certo almeno sarebbe buona disposizione per secondarne l'indirizzo, e foggia tutta l'anima e la vita a norma di quello.

Se poi la tua fantasia posta l'idea della grandezza nel sommo splendore, che circonda i nomi d'un Atanasio, d'un Agostino, d'un Grisostomo, d'un Gregorio settimo, ama di scherzare quasi cercasse invano quale di noi ritragga in sè l'immagine d'alcun di loro, non lo avremo per anco ad ingiuria. — Non già che alcun diritto ti consenta di volere, che un Istituto il quale rinunzia a quelle sublimi cariche, donde ci scegli i modelli, ne ricopii le forme; nè quasi che sorgessero ogni dì e in ogni angolo in sì gran numero gli eroi di quel merito, tu possa con ragione esigerne molti di simil grado da questa menoma Compagnia: — ma mentre li cerchi fra noi prima che altrove, ciò solo mostra, che non ci tieni per così vili.

Sì dunque, sia pur nostra condizione di fornire alla Chiesa uomini di singolar prudenza e vigore e dottrina e santità, — il mondo abbia pur da esigere che sian più frequenti tra i Gesuiti gli eroi d'ogni virtù cristiana, che non fra gli allievi di più

stendere co' tutti la gloria che di questa partecipo da soli pochi anni.

Se non che la questione non verte qui sì propriamente sopra le persone, ma sopra la bontà della regola che tu stimi oppressiva d'ogni valor personale. — Nè pur mai alcun Gesuita per lodevole che mi paia, in confronto de' sommi che ci s'innanzi; solo mi permetterò di accoppiare i più illustri campioni della Compagnia tanti altri, di cui ogni ceto religioso fa onore alla medesima virtù di obbedienza ciascuno professa secondo il proprio istituto.

E tenendo la mira a quel carattere speciale di grandezza, che vuoi essere spontaneità di degni e forti concetti, la libertà del proprio consiglio, l'attività intraprendente, per virtù di valore individuale, accennerò come anche qui abbia luogo sotto l'obbedienza gesuitica.

Già quanto ai primi, che obbedirono a sant' Ignazio, tu stesso li noverirai grandi e ci poni in memoria le loro imprese, la loro dottrina, l'ardor apostolico scossero non che tanta parte d' Europa, anche le spiagge più remote de' due emisferi. — Ma quanti dappoi non tennero dietro al Saverio, e non si distesero a tutte le terre, e con pari sacrificio di sè, e tra pari fatiche e con successi niente meno magnifici, e con una corona da lui invidiata? — La sola Cina, non fu essa, a conquistare da Matteo Ricci, una missione tutta di dotti e prudentissimi uomini, e non meno ardenti di zelo santo, e pieni di umiltà e di spirito evangelico, attivissimi in ogni opera di carità — pronti ogni dì al martirio? — Ora questa medesima missione si è riaperta, e l' obbedienza è troppo più necessaria a frenare i molti, che vogliono, e ne sarebber degni, che non a spingervi alcuno.

Percorri tutto l' Oriente dall' Etiopia e l' Arabia all'estremo Giappone — di sotto a' tuoi occhi il nuovo mondo intiero — poi rammenta che da più di due secoli la Compagnia spediva ogni anno buon numero di missionarii, o a conquistare nuovi popoli a Cristo, o a succedere alle battaglie de' martiri — sino ad averne per un secolo in incessante esercizio dell' apostolato oltre a duemila; e ti parrà che il valore individuale, l'ardire, la forza, il senno, la nobile facoltà di reggere salutarmente popoli, o lo spontaneo ardore di carità pe' simili avesse da provocarsi più oltre? — queste medesime missioni d' Asia, d' Africa, d' America ei si riaprono d' anno in anno e vi doveriamo oltre a cinquecento soggetti, non del tutto indegni de' loro predecessori (1).

(1) Il catalogo stampato nel principio del 1845 ce li descrive così giusta le notizie raccolte nel 1844; alle quali pertanto sarebbero da aggiungersi i tanti più soggetti partiti nel corrente di quest' anno.

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li, ed alle corone, che si possano più santamente ambire? Quelli erano per lo più educati da questa nostra obbedienza; ma essa non avea loro tolto alcuna facoltà loro propria, non inceppava la spontaneità del loro operare, sì li diresse a fruttare ciascuno secondo le sue particolari doti, quale con la dottrina, quale con la fatica, quale con consiglio, e i molti con una morte da eroi.

Ma ne' paesi cattolici ancora, nelle città, nelle campagne, per valli, per monti, sulle flotte e fra le battaglie, che cosa furono tanti Missionarii Gesuiti se non uomini pieni di ardore, di efficacia e di quella saviezza, che sa conquistare l'impero sopra i sentimenti, per solo condurle al bene?

Perchè non erano questi inceppati da quella funesta obbedienza passiva? Forse che eran più santi, più grandi, perchè meno fedeli ai loro voti? Certo nè anche è presente la Compagnia consentirebbe a slanciare a tali opere alcuno de' suoi religiosi, che presumesse di sè medesimo, nè tuttavia vuol animi così dipendenti, che non abbiano energia di mente e di petto, onde reggere sè stessi, e far valere i diritti di Dio sopra l'umana malizia.

Se non che l'energia e la grandezza dell'uomo non conduce a questa sola maniera d'imprese. — Altri ha più speciale valore per un genere d'opere o di studi, altri per un altro. — Ora l'obbedienza gesuitica non sembra aver punto soffocato alcuna scintilla d'ingegno, alcuna singolare tendenza, che potesse promettere frutti alquanto segnalati.

Io rammentava testè gli scienziati, gli eruditi, gli oratori — non occorre ch'io ripeta quelli che giunsero degnamente a maggior fama. Aggiungiamo ora i tanti che più dati alla vita operativa fondarono per ogni dove istituti di vario genere d'utilità: orfanotrofi, conservatori, seminarii di allievi per le Missioni, case di rifugio o di lavoro, o che posti a dirigere siffatti istituti vi promossero col senno e con la fatica l'educazione dei poveri, la carità de' ricchi, la prosperità della repubblica, il servizio della Chiesa; e senza esigere, che i lor nomi si diano uno splendore che non hanno ambito, vedi se uomini di quella fatta poterono aversi per condotti macchinalmente o se tralignarono per avventura dall'istituto della Compagnia, o se obbedienti da veri Gesuiti non abbiano altresì da veri cittadini prodotto a comun pro bastanti frutti del proprio valore.

Ma vuoi uno splendor di virtù e di dottrina Pastorale? vuoi servigi eminenti e illustri, nel governo della Chiesa? Tu sai, che un voto ci remove non che dall'ambire, ma pur dall'accettare le dignità ecclesiastiche, salvo un precetto irresistibile del Papa . . . Ma fra i pochi innalzati per questo modo puoi rammentare il Toletto e i

*gazzone della Fede* — alcune di queste missioni hanno fornito memorie più complete e preziosissime del loro essere. — Dal Missouri abbiamo il viaggio del P. Desmet stampato testè a Bruxelles — degli Stati Uniti avevano stampato assai prima le loro notizie i PP. Gio. Grassi, Van Quikenborn, Du Buisson, — dalla Cina abbiamo presso ad un volume di lettere litografate a Parigi — tre volumi in 4.<sup>o</sup> dal Maduré. — Questa missione singolarmente contrastata da tribolazioni e morti si salda e cresce, — e attrae il fiore de' nostri giovani sacerdoti, de' quali, al numero di 23 descritto qui sopra, se aggiungiamo i già discesi nella tomba, e i novellamente partiti, noveriamo nel giro di sì pochi anni sino a 40. Tra quelli che abbiamo a deplorare rammenterò il P. Gualtero Clifford giovane di grandi speranze, figlio del nobil Lord di questo nome, il P. Garnier Superiore. Disegno ed opera di questo rimane a Trichinopoli una bella chiesa con abitazione de' nostri. Presto vi sorgerà anche un osservatorio astronomico in servizio della scienza. — Altro osservatorio astronomico fu finito di erigere a Georgetown in questo anno. Il P. Ryder, provinciale della Marilandia, venuto in Italia per cercare compagni, ripartì, due mesi sono, con otto giovani Gesuiti, tutti Italiani.

Leggiamo nelle lettere di colà, che sono pe' missionarii di grande stimolo le memorie, che vi trovarono de' nostri Padri antichi ancora vive, nonchè ne' monumenti di pietà, di scienza, d'arte, da essi lasciati, ma molto più nel cuore de' popoli.



Or sia poi, se ti pare, troppo maggior il numero di coloro, che si rimangono nell'oscurità de' Collegi o dei ministeri inferiori, vittime di obbedienza e di perfidia — son questi perduti ai tuoi occhi od uomini avviliti? Si può costruire un edificio così che ogni pietra vi faccia di sè bella comparsa? o non è bella ancora la vera architettura d'un Bramante? E posto pure, che la nostra professione cancelli così in ognuno di noi la maniera originale ed individuale del proprio sentire ed operare, da farci tutti a modo d'un sol uomo, ma in tanti luoghi e in tante opere preziose ed efficace a servizio della Chiesa cattolica: giunti a mutare la picciolezza presente in una forma di essere, che ha sì del grande, saremmo per avventura meno noi? meno liberi? meno consci dell'indipendenza morale? meno certi dell'immortale cor-  
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Ammettiamo solo che la Chiesa abbia approvato quest'istituto nostro fra le cose onde essa spera un qualsiasi bene: e così è di fatto; l'impegnarsi una volta per sempre a concorrere a quel bene da lei inteso, non è esso tal atto di cui l'uomo abbia mai più a pentirsi? La libertà consiste forse a non dover fermare alcuna risoluzione? O non sono le più lodate, le più meritorie quelle, per cui l'uomo si impegna a maggiori sacrifici, senza poterli o volerli più ritrattare? O il sacrificio della propria volontà per voler solo oramai servire in qualsiasi ufficio a pro della Chiesa, quando il religioso lo risolve dietro ad una riflessione e un'esperienza di due anni, non è abbastanza libero e decisivo da parteciparne il merito ogni azione che segua in vita? O non è ancor nobilissimo esercizio del proprio arbitrio il ripetersi ad ogni punto fra le noie e le asprezze del dovere assunto, *iterum iterumque voveo etc.*

Ma che dirai, se ti scopro come parecchi di coloro, che parrebbero opposti al loro genio, o trattenuti dall'operare più utilmente, son anzi uomini, che giovare secondo la lor natura, e trovarsi contenti, avevano bisogno del ritiro e dell'obbedienza?

Son certe anime di tempra così angelica, e fatte per soli uffici di spirito, che le faccende della vita pratica sarebbero avviliti e desolate. La dipendenza dall'obbedienza le sgrava dal pensiero d'ogni occorrenza che le tocchi, — e le fa libere a meditare, al filosofare, all'insegnare, in una parola, a spiegare l'attività loro propria in quella sfera speciale, in cui possano conseguire più segnalato valore.

Perchè rimproverarle? perchè invidiar la loro pace ed il loro merito, che trovan col sacrificio d'un'altra sorta di libertà, la quale avrebbe rese infelici, e forse impedite ad ogni bene?

Ma tu vedi i ceppi dell'obbedienza distendersi perfino sul pensiero di que' padri Gesuiti! *Invece di conceder loro quella libertà che è richiesta ad ogni opera loro, e specialmente a quella dell'intelletto l'ordine si studia di comprimerla e di attutarli.* — *I Gesuiti non sono nè anco padroni de' loro giudizi e delle loro parole* (Proleg. p. 303).

Or se non vale ch'io il neghi, poichè diresti non esser io padrone di far sentenze, e le parole essermi dettate dal Generale, o dal Provinciale: — guarda di vicino a un fatto che vale per tutti. — Guarda a quei migliaia di volumi usciti da nostri studi.

Perchè quell'ordine che tarpa le penne agli intelletti vigorosi avrebbe potuto posto tanti pensieri? e qualunque sia il merito delle scritture ove sono deposti, hanno parecchie tutta l'impronta originale di chi le dettò? Od è varietà di opinioni disputabili nella Chiesa, che non sia stata per diversi aspetti considerata e discussa da quanti Gesuiti il vollero, qualunque fosse il parere del Provinciale o del Generale? Se una regola ti vale una tirannia, come dunque crederò che tu ammetta la censura sotto il regno della libertà?

Quanto a noi per prevenire tra i nostri scrittori la licenza, le stravaganze

vata ai superni principî di fede, l'intenzione rivolta a giovare al prossimo per la gloria di Dio, e docile l'orecchio ad udire le riflessioni altrui. — Se poi ogni legge vuole magistrati e censori che ne esigano l'osservanza, l'osservanza spontanea di questa fa pur sì, che non sentiamo d'aver chi ci costringa. — O se coll'essere più intenti a seguirla accade che sia maggiore fra noi una certa moderazione ed uniformità di sensi, mi pare, che quello debba appunto accadere fra i sinceri cultori del vero cattolico, il quale tolto a considerare per mille diversi aspetti, e ad esprimere in mille forme, se quanti il facciano procedono dirittamente, li concentra verso i medesimi principî, e scema fra loro le contese, le esagerazioni, la gara di avventurare ognuno un concetto, che più si discosti dal comune.

Ad ogni modo, se ho creduto di poter dimostrare col fatto, che l'obbedienza voluta dal nostro istituto non ci toglie la naturale energia, la libertà del riflettere, del risolvere, del creare; se ho protestato che sotto la direzione di quella ci sentiamo più sciolti da molti inciampi per isvolgere ciascuno di concerto cogli altri quelle facoltà individuali che più fruttino a gloria di Dio; non voglio negare ch'essa importi soggezione — ch'essa sia un sacrificio, — ch'essa sia uno di que' consigli di morale evangelica per cui si compie l'*abneget semetipsum*.

Non so tuttavia se questa confessione ti dia il diritto di inferire, che per questo tanto adunque l'attività e la dignità umana ne soffrano danno.

Lascio bensì, che i savii del secolo ne pensino ciò che loro aggrada; l'umiltà cristiana è un punto di dottrina troppo sopra il natural sentire da potersi persuadere efficacemente con ragioni.

Quest'è anzi lo scoglio decisivo a cui conviene che rompa la prudenza del mondo. Finchè essa tiene per qualunque plausibil pretesto ai principî d'amor proprio e di indipendenza, tanto da negarne in qualche parte il sacrificio a Gesù crocifisso, sempre per altrettanto resterà in disaccordo con la sapienza di quel Dio umiliato ed obbediente sino a tal estremo; e quell'estremo abbassamento avrà per iscandalo e per insensatezza.

Onde non è qui via possibile al disinganno, se non un primo e sempre più profondo umiliarsi nel credere a Gesù Cristo, più che al proprio discernimento.

E chi sia giunto ad umiliare così profondamente l'intelletto e il cuore da accettare la dottrina evangelica nei punti necessari alla salute, non può per anco apprezzare l'eccellenza che sia nel soggettarsi all'obbedienza religiosa, se non si prova sinceramente a spingere l'umiltà e la santità cristiana oltre alla misura del precetto, fino alla perfezione, che è di consiglio.

Quindi è, che per ogni rispetto ci conviene star paghi di mantenere i nostri impegni con Dio senza aspettare, che il mondo ci abbia per meritevoli d'altro fuorchè de' suoi disprezzi; nè speriamo d'illuminarlo altrimenti intorno alla sapienza di Cristo, fuorchè perseverando a praticarla e a darne l'esempio, e pregando lo spirito di Lui che indirizzi le menti, le muova e le conduca a quel termine dove c'impone di chiamarle.

Ci difendiamo pertanto da quelle sole accuse, che fanno torto alla dottrina d'umiltà, di obbedienza, di fedeltà alla Chiesa ed al nostro istituto, e dalle quali, se fossero credute vere, seguirebbe che Gesù Cristo e la Chiesa ci hanno condotti per una via tenebrosa a diventar peggiori degli altri uomini.

Ci difendiamo da quelle imputazioni di corruttela e tralignamento dal primitivo istituto, le quali, credute vere, ci toglierebbero la fiducia de' popoli; e annienterebbero l'opera dei ministeri che ci sono affidati.

Ma debba pure durare in perpetuo siffatta nostra condizione d'essere calunniati, e d'aver onde gloriarci, di essere dispregiati, e di portarne più manifesta l'im-

alla Chiesa e a Dio.

Del resto i più solenni vituperi, le pubbliche condanne, gli spogliamenti, l'ilio, tu sai, che furon sempre in riguardo alla Chiesa ed ai suoi ministri un mezzo con cui piacque alla divina provvidenza di raddoppiarne le forze.

Tu domandi se la Compagnia dacchè è risorta abbia contribuito a rendere la fede cristiana più persuasiva; se a fare che la morale evangelica sia più reverenda ed amabile; se ad accrescere la venerazione alla santa Sede; se a conciliarle la riconversione degli erranti; se ad assolidare i diritti legittimi de' principi; se a soddisfare i desiderii ragionevoli e discreti, e allutare le brame immoderate delle nazioni; se a fomentare la quiete e procurare la felicità di tutti.

Ciò potrebbe per avventura eccedere lo stretto debito possibile a soddisfare una società religiosa, confinata per la maggior sua parte ne' collegii dove attendono uno e ad educare i giovani suoi studenti, e a fare scuola ad una generazione straniera agli affari del dì.

Ma ad ogni modo quel pubblico ed ampio ministero, che non avremmo potuto intraprendere o sostenere presso gli erranti ed i Cattolici, presso i popoli e i Sovrani a gloria del Vangelo e della santa Sede, e di ogni principio di equità, di sapienza, di virtù umana o celeste, altri ce lo rese possibile. E col metterci in mezzo a tutto il mondo intero, col suscitare ogni sorta di interessi contrarii, col occuparsi del nostro essere e della nostra condotta, col contrapporre ognora più precisamente i nostri principii e i nostri fatti a quelli d'ogni buona o rea condizione di uomini; col denunciarcì ora ai Principi come infedeli, ora ai popoli come fautori di dispotismo, ora ai dotti come nemici del sapere, ora ai semplici come gente astorata e rapace, e qui ai Vescovi come sudditi ribelli alla loro giurisdizione, e là ai razionalisti come colonna del vecchio cattolicismo, e provocando in certo modo la revisione di tutti gli atti della lunga lite, che si era terminata con la soppressione della Compagnia, sicchè tutta ricomparisse l'ingiustizia delle accuse, e il vero intento di sollecitare la condanna, e la barbarie di coloro che l'eseguirono, — si pose in presenza a chi sappia riflettere che cosa siamo alfine, e che cosa vogliamo, e da che nostro ministero sia a temersi, da chi averci per salutare.

Sì, tutta questa lotta contribuì anch'essa con le altre cagioni a ciò misurato dalla divina Provvidenza a fare che e Pastori e popoli si dichiarassero più devoti alla santa Sede; che gli eterodossi discernessero viemeglio un carattere proprio della vera Chiesa, uno spirito che le sacre Scritture non valgono sole ad infondere; che i politici s'internassero a discernere i principii di vera libertà; che infine lo spirito di fazione, d'ipocrisia, di violenza, di fanatismo manifestatosi per tutto dove ve, ma non tra noi, le anime diritte ed intese a cercare la Chiesa e Gesù Cristo scorgessero meglio la via, e parecchie ci scegliessero per guide (1).

(1) Quella tua sentenza, che gli eretici si convertirebbero più presto al cattolicismo se la Chiesa si nettasse dalla macchia onde il gesuitismo la deturpa ai loro occhi, può parer agli altri più strana che non pensasti — io dico, che non ti sfuggì dalla penna se non perchè la tua fantasia consulta sempre lo spirito della Chiesa, e sorvola troppo sublime ai fatti ed alle condizioni storiche.

Un conflitto contro l'eresia è dovere per parte della Chiesa Cattolica. E il vanto più bello della Compagnia si abbia per testimonio della santa Sede e dei fatti, è appunto d'essere stata fondata per sostenere con ispeciale impegno questo conflitto opponendo agli errori la vera dottrina, all'ignoranza la forza, agli artifizii una prudenza attiva — tanto da esser fatta precipuo segno all'odio de' settarii.

Ma quest'odio fu egli il solo pro di tanto sapere, e di tanto pugnare, e di tanto patire da parte della Compagnia? Collegatisi a servizio della Chiesa? Chi può numerare le conversioni operate per il ministero della Compagnia?

e vedere all'opera dal secolo la voce, la forza, ed ogni arte sua a raddoppiare i en-  
cacia de' nostri ministeri.

— Qui veramente è poco il merito nostro individuale, altro che lo stringersi che  
ognuno di noi sappia fare sempre più fortemente al proprio istituto, per non lasciarsi  
scuotere dai timori a rinnegare una professione di tanta pazienza ed umiltà.

— Ma qualunque sia la lode dovuta a questo merito solo, io non dubito, che  
non s'ii tu per invidiarcela, quando la metti a confronto con quella, che può tornarci  
dall'impresa, cui assumesti a danno di uomini innocenti e deboli, ad oltraggio d'una  
regola santa, a distruzione di que' medesimi principî di fede, di ordine, di armonia,  
che pur vorresti stabiliti fra ogni ceto ed ogni nazione.

### OSSEQUIO VERSO LA SANTA SEDE.

Il principio di obbedienza, che si censura nella Compagnia collegandosi con  
quello d'una special devozione verso il supremo Capo della Chiesa, i Gesuiti furono  
troppo più spesso rimproverati di esagerare i diritti del Papa, che non d'esserli d-

della Compagnia, per non dir altro, coi soli libri? E a tacere del Becano, del Bellarmino, del Gre-  
zero, del Campiano ecc. più modernamente quanti non ridussero alla fede i trattati del Veron e de  
P. Dez, e le lettere dei PP. Scheffmacher e Seedorff tradotte in varie lingue? O ti avrò per sì nuo-  
vo, che io abbia a ritesserti la storia di Sigismondo di Polonia, di Cristina di Svezia, e della cor-  
versione del Principe di Sassonia, e di quelle altre case principesche di Germania, che tanto con-  
solarono la Chiesa?

L'odio ingiusto suppone infatti in chi ne è l'oggetto un diritto all'amore, alla fiducia, all'  
gratitudine. — Ora l'odio che le sette eretiche aveano concepito, e fomentavano contro la Compa-  
gnia, come milizia della Chiesa Cattolica, impugnatrice delle loro dottrine, era ingiusto certamen-  
te, nè altro fuorchè odio della Chiesa e della verità.

Resta che sia vera l'ipotesi sopra la quale tu sembri ragionare, che cioè al presente, mol-  
ti erranti si accostino per simpatia, per convincimento alla Chiesa, e ne li trattienga la bruttezza del  
gesuitismo, di che potrebbe sì agevolmente mondarsi. — Ma come può esser questo, se de' mo-  
derni altri ci difendono neppure convertiti Dallas, Schoell, Ranke, Macaulay ecc., altri appena  
convertiti Haller, Hurter ecc., altri non contenti di rendersi Cattolici si fanno di più Gesuiti  
e ne abbiamo nelle Province di Svizzera, di Francia e di America, e altri che sono in via di  
convertirsi dicono di noi cose di tanta lode, che se non fosse per questa tua benedetta catilina  
maria che ci fai contro, non oseremmo pur farne parola; tanto sono esse onorevoli.

Piacemi recarne per prova almeno questi cenni dati sì appositamente da' celebri dottori co-  
detti Puseisti che ora redigono le *Vite de' Santi Inglesi*.

« Egli ( il re Alfredo ) tremava al nome de' santi Vescovi, degli Anselmi, dei Dunstan  
e dei Becket, e ben a ragione poichè essi erano assai sopra di lui. La stessa politica malizi-  
osa già da alcuni secoli fa tutti gli sforzi per soffocare lo spirito, che s. Ignazio di Loiola la-  
sciò sopra la terra, ma questo non fa, che rinvigorire e crescere ogni dì più perchè veri  
e nobiltà di pensare, principî celesti, e maravigliosa santità son in suo favore. » ( *Lives of  
the English Saints. London 1844. — Life of s. Volfrid p. 149* ). — Nella vita di s. Stefano  
Arcivescovo di Cantorbéry, pareggiansi i Gesuiti de' nostri giorni coi Monaci Cisterciensi, che  
ai tempi del Re Giovanni erano il fiore della Chiesa, e l'oggetto della più raffinata avversione  
de' malvagi ( *Life of s. Stef. Langton Archbishop of Cantorbéry p. 44* ) — Nella vita di  
s. Adamano si giunge a dire che se alcuni « Ordini religiosi tralignarono, la verità costringe  
a sempre eccettuarne la nobilissima e gloriosa Compagnia di sant' Ignazio, la quale dopo la  
Chiesa visibile può forse riguardarsi come il più grande e permanente miracolo in quest  
mondo » ( *Life of s. Adaman, pag. 120* ). Taccio d'una più distesa testimonianza e più  
recente, di cui odo parlare, ma che non posso citare con precisione, perchè non l'ho sotto  
gli occhi.

Sebbene non è qui mio scopo il raccogliere più o meno lusinghiere lodi da lingue eterodosse,  
ciò a che io guardo sì è il come la tribolazione e l'abbiezione ci sia volta in acconcio mezzo  
di destare o di alimentare perfino negli erranti un senso che li accosta alla vera Chiesa. — O  
se tant'è, chi ci dà onde meritare che accelerino in folla il loro ritorno? Ovvero come prose-  
guirai a rimproverarci la nostra debolezza, o l'avversione che altri abbia al Cattolicesimo per  
odio di noi? O come sarà vero che l'esser odiati ci renda inutili o d'inciampo?

*alcanit... repletur ex multis curibus cogitationes.*

Tu non inclini veramente a rimproverarci un culto esagerato verso il Pontefice. Or che sei inteso a ravvivare questo affetto in seno agli Italiani, una le inquisizione sopra i nostri eccessi in questa parte, nuocerebbe presso il volgo tua causa.

Bensì era naturale, che tu ci dovessi accusare di *resistere all'autorità* ; ogni qual volta torna in acconcio alle nostre mire ( Proleg. p. 158. ). è piaciuto di risuscitare come buon argomento di questa nostra colpa le anticuse de' Giansenisti, o d' altri niente migliori testimonii o giudici contro i Missionari Cinesi. — Questione deplorabile, che ho dichiarata altrove, dove discorrendo dottrine teologiche, ricordo questo forzato soggetto di polemica, e intorno alla non so, cui dovrebbe esser più bello il tacere, o più legittima fiducia nel giudizio sommi Pastori. — Certo almeno da un sistema, al quale tra i Missionarii della Compagnia Francescani, Agostiniani, ecc. nè primi, nè soli, nè tutti parteciparono i Gesuiti, colà ; da un dovere, le cui circostanze sono sì lungi dal permettere allo storico teologo un' asserzione incontrastabile, da un modo di obbedire nel quale se è colpa è tutta individuale, e non giunge ad illanguidire lo zelo che fa i Martiri, il valor di logica, che arrivi a poterne dedurre a discredito della sincera devozione della Compagnia verso la santa Sede che i suoi religiosi *siano per resistere con scrupolo ogni qual volta loro torna in acconcio.*

Bensì discrediti il tuo dire, quando a porgerne una prima prova t' introduci per simil via. Avresti potuto con maggior decoro e novità ( quando la coscienza t' avesse concesso ) riferir solo le prove di quell' insolenza, con cui peggio che non *Lutero ai Papi de' suoi tempi*, la Compagnia giunse ad oltraggiare il Papa, che fu soppressa ( Proleg. ibid. ).

E avrei accettato volentieri una disfida onorata intorno a questo punto ; e i fatti mi par capitale e decisivo, per tutta insieme la causa, di cui trattiamo.

Di qui tu potevi pretendere di provare l' estrema perversità de' Gesuiti ; gli stessi costretti ad ammettere la loro condanna rivestita d' un' autorità irrefragabile, avresti tolto quell' unica protezione, cui possano affidarsi ; e l' Italia e il mondo già da te a venerare nei Papi i tutori della moderna civiltà, ti avrebbero secondo con tanto maggior vigore a sterminarci da ogni angolo della terra, come nemici del loro bene.

Era dunque da prendersi questo punto a discutere seriamente da ambe le parti — e mi sarei tuttavia promesso di ritrarne vantaggio così a lode della Compagnia come a maggior ossequio verso la Sede romana, e a consolazione di tutti i cattolici e tua ; poichè non dubito, che tu non sii per goder assai più di trovarci conser- co' principii, che professi, e degni della fiducia del comun Padre, che non di vederli da quei principii discordi, e te costretto a dannarci.

Ma poichè nell' accennare quest' accusa in due luoghi del tuo scritto, ci daresti bensì discordi ne' fatti dalle parole e colpevoli di resistenza e d' insolenza la Compagnia, *postergando all' egoismo della Compagnia le cose più sacrosante*, nè citi prova fuorchè in generale certi *Scrittori della Setta*, che vuoi dire probabilmente non Gesuiti in verità, ma degni, a parer tuo, d' esserci incorporati, e dopo la tua alla sfuggita questi pochi dardi, mi lasci padrone del campo, prenderò io la qu- ne in mano, e l' andrò svolgendo pei varii suoi aspetti in quell' ordine, che mi par più acconcio al trionfo del vero.

La questione della condotta tenuta o dovuta tenersi dalla Compagnia rispetto al Breve, con cui Clemente XIV la sopprime, può essere considerata sotto l' aspetto del fatto, e sotto quello del diritto.



pressione toccò la Compagnia attuale — o a che i obbligasse nell'atto che la colpiva.

In secondo luogo quanto al fatto sarebbe a vedere se la Compagnia ossia nell'atto che veniva soppressa, o dopo abbia offeso il Breve nei confini, ai quali si estendeva il diritto di quello.

V'ha chi argomenta dalla soppressione decretata nel 1773, che nè pur al presente la Compagnia meriti di esistere. — Ma qualunque forza avesse il Breve di Clemente XIV per sopprimere un Ordine religioso, altrettanta e più n'ebbe la Bolla di tutto regolare di Pio VII per ripristinarlo. — Poi, o la Compagnia presente proseguiva a meritare la fiducia de' sommi Pontefici — e in questo caso la sentenza di Clemente XIV non le fa danno; o viene a prevaricare dall'istituto, e nuove colpe esigeranno un nuovo giudizio, e una nuova sentenza.

Et tant'è; che nella Compagnia o sono da condannarsi le persone come infedeli alla Regola imposta, — o tutt'insieme con le persone la Regola, che le svia dal buon sentiero. — Ora la Regola dichiarata tante volte Santa da Paolo III, per l'intera serie de' sommi Pontefici, che si succedettero in due secoli e mezzo fino a Clemente XIV, è di nuovo dichiarata Santa da Pio VII, che ce ne raccomandò l'esatta osservanza. — Dunque non resterebbero a censurarsi fuorchè le persone, quando tralignassero dall'istituto che professano. — Ora non è chi possa concepire, che o noi fossimo prima di nascere già condannati per infedeli fin dal 1773, — o perchè succediamo ai nostri Padri nella professione d'una Regola santa, abbiamo ad ereditare la macchia delle colpe a loro imputate.

Non si può dunque avere il Breve di Clemente XIV come uno di que' giudizi anticipati, i quali ancorchè non giungano a colpire, valgono tuttavia a dare peso a sospetti. L'istituto non ne soffre; le persone non sono più quelle. La nostra causa, tutta nuova, e indipendente da quell'atto. — Lo dobbiamo rispettare in quanto riguarda i nostri Padri — ma non ci riguarda, e non possiamo essere giudicati dietro a ciò che contiene (1).

Ma qual fu il debito de' nostri Padri verso il Breve che li disperdette? fu di obbedire, senza resistenza, con rispetto all'autorità del supremo Pastore.

Questo è il punto che scioglie la gran questione, chè se non fosse stata tale l'obbedienza della Compagnia, la santa Sede sarebbe stata la prima a volerne pubblica soddisfazione, nè mai l'avrebbe rimessa nell'essere antico, senza pretendere che si riconoscesse per colpevole la disubbidienza, protestando se non altro, com'è costume ne' Brevi o nelle Bolle emanate in proposito della Compagnia. Ora nè tu nè altri saprebbe appuntarvi una parola sola di rimprovero che alluda a questo. Donde, chiedendo, prendi tu dunque argomento di querela cotanto atroce e nuova, con cui c'infami? Pio VI ci amò e favorì quanto le circostanze de' tempi, che allora correvan iniqui, sofferarono, e prima della sua morte concesse, sebbene in forma privata a Ferdinando di Parma i Gesuiti. Si aprì il noviziato in Colorno e a maestro de' novizi vi fu destinato il Venerabile Padre Pignatelli: v'entrò un fiore di giovani, e tra questi Angelo Mai, ora splendore ed ornamento del sacro collegio. Pio VII confermò nella Russia i Gesuiti col Breve *catholicae fidei*, li rimise nel regno delle due Sicilie col altro Breve *per alias*, li ristabilì in tutto il mondo colla Bolla *sollicitudo*, e inoltre decretò gli onori di Beato a Francesco di Geronimo col Breve *praeconcepta opinio*. Lodi, speranze, voti e quanto può fare a commendazione della Compagnia, non una parola sola a rimprovero o a biasimo vi leggerai. Leone XII ci amò pure e beneficiò non poco. Collocò sugli altari Alfonso Rodriguez, ci restituì il collegio romano col

(1) Intorno a questo punto della soppressione oltre alle scritture di altri autori merita d'esser letto l'articolo *Gesuiti*, nel dizionario di erudizione ecc. compilato dal Cav. Gaetano Moroni Primo Aiutante di Camera di Sua Santità Gregorio XVI.

del suo dominio, la volle in Propaganda, canonizzò il D. Francesco di Gerolamo fece un dono inestimabile nella persona del Card. Odescalchi, dispensando, caso o rarissimo, che potesse essere, come voleva, de' nostri. Vedi dunque che finalmente XIV a noi la Compagnia ebbe dai sommi Pontefici lodi, grazie e favori singolarissimi, neppure una parola che ci faccia que' disubbidienti, che tu vorresti.

Ma se nell'atto di sciogliere la Compagnia il Pontefice dava luogo a credere d'averla riconosciuta colpevole, non erano i Gesuiti obbligati a credersi tali? suiti che professano di credere i Papi infallibili nei loro giudizi?

Potrei qui citare la risposta data da Monsignor De Beaumont, Arcivescovo di Parigi, ad un Breve particolare con cui il Papa Clemente XIV lo avea esortato ad accettare e a far accettare dal suo Clero il Breve di soppressione (1).

Quel Venerando e dotto sostenitore della Religione in Francia espose al sommo Pontefice, che la Chiesa intiera ha ricevuto come infallibile sì e pari in vigore di autorità alle sentenze de' Concilii generali la Bolla *Apostolicum pascendi munus*, con cui Clemente XIII li 6 agosto 1765 dopo interrogati tutti i Vescovi della Cattolica Chiesa dichiarò con tutte le forme regolari, santo l'istituto della Compagnia di Gesù, e da tenersi; che per conseguenza il Breve, che la sopprime otto anni dopo, non può esser che come un giudizio particolare e personale.

Chi non crede l'infallibilità del Papa non potrebbe non esser pago di questo ragionamento.

Ma pel credere, che noi facciamo, infallibile una definizione *ex cathedra*, siamo impegnati ad avere per tale ogni atto, che emani dal sommo Pontefice in materie disciplinari, o sopra misure economiche, e in semplice forma di Breve.

E quando la speciale professione di obbedienza, che è propria della Compagnia, la impegnasse a sottomettersi, più ciecamente che altri, a qualunque cenno del suo Capo, in qualunque forma le sia fatto partecipare, ne seguirebbe solo che essa dovette obbedire al comando, senza entrare nelle ragioni di esso. — Il comando era la dispersione de' Gesuiti, la ragione era la necessità per cui Clemente XIV giudicò di doversi redimere con quell'atto dalle vessazioni di alcune Corti. Questa necessità gli parve dimostrata dalle accuse mosse così contro l'Istituto, contro la condotta della Compagnia. Quanto alla dispersione adunque i nostri poterono riconoscersi obbligati ad obbedire; quanto alle ragioni di quel precetto dovettero lasciare alla coscienza di chi ne era l'autore.

Nè i teologi discorrono per altrimenti delle definizioni ancor infallibili de' Concilii ecumenici. — Di esse la sola proposizione definitiva esige fede; le ragioni d'autorità, onde il decreto possa essere corredato, non hanno già tanta forza, ma la sola per cui reggono alla logica, e alla buona critica. Tanto chè non si fa in un decreto d'autorità infallibile, se anco alcuna delle ragioni recate nel decreto non si hanno per buone.

Ma certo la Compagnia obbligata fino allora ad avere il suo Istituto per buono non poteva avere per buona ragione della propria condanna, qualunque riferimento nel Breve si facesse del reo concetto in che era presso i suoi nemici. — Quando ai fatti imputati niuno li può credere contro sua coscienza; al più accettare la sentenza imposta dal giudice.

(1) *Lettre de Monseigneur l'archevêque de Paris, en réponse etc. 24 avril 1775. Vedi Hist. de la chute des Jésuites par Paul Lamache. — Paris 1845. Append. Num. 1.* Mi vieto per amore di brevità di riferire un altro giudizio anche più grave nel medesimo senso, ed è *Votum seu suffragium ab Em. Card. Antonelli datum in causa Jesuitarum 1775*, pubblicato da Crist. De Murr. nel *Journal Zur Kunstgeschichte* (part. IX) pag. 101 s., di cui V. un estratto nella sopracc. Append. num. VIII.

Ecco la questione di fatto.

Certo se i Gesuiti fossero stati quegli uomini che tu fingi di credere, anche inabili, come altri li dice, ma superbi, rivoltosi, gelosi della propria esistenza dopo radunati in Italia a più di dieci o dodici mila (che tanti v'erano stati portati da tutti i dominii di Spagna e di Portogallo) avrebbero pur potuto dare a Roma qualche inquietudine. — Supponi loro fra le mani que' tesori che si sogliono vantare dal mondo — o vedi ridotti alla penuria que' tanti esuli raccolti su queste spiagge; in qualunque ipotesi poteano pure tentare di farsi rispettare ed ascoltare.

Ma che scorgi al contrario? Già mentre presentono il colpo, tutta una Congregazione generale, che fu l'ultima, non vuole nel disciogliersi lasciare altro piano di guerra. altro mezzo da sostenere la Compagnia fuorchè la purità di coscienza, la fedeltà alla regola, l'unione con Dio (1). Quelli sono i maneggi, quelli gli intrighi, le trame, le resistenze, le insolenze de' Gesuiti, mentre potevano forse coi mezzi umani schernirsi dalle tribolazioni; ed è chi lor rinfaccia di non averlo voluto, dandoli per inetti, e degni per ciò di cader vittime della prepotenza delle Corti.

Quando poi loro fu intimata la soppressione, per qualunque gli esecutori aggravassero l'asprezza del supremo volere, i Gesuiti non si mostrarono punto meno mansueti verso il Pontefice ed i suoi ministri, di quello che i più di loro avean già fatto verso Carvalho, Choiseul, D'Aranda ed altri giudici niente più rispettabili.

La Chiesa intera, non che i Principi, sapean sì bene quanta fiducia meritassero personalmente que' religiosi, che i Vescovi ne vollero a dirigere i lor Seminarii, le città a presidi delle biblioteche e delle accademie, i popoli a lor pastori, e perfino Pio VI e Pio VII a lor teologi.

E giacchè ti mostri sì nuovo delle cose nostre, che per combatterci vai raffazzonando vecchie accuse e ne ordisci delle nuove anche sul punto del nostro attaccamento al Papa, senza por mente che intorno a ciò l'opinion pubblica è troppo ben stabilita a favor nostro, piacciati di aprire i supplementi alla biblioteca degli scrittori Gesuiti stampata in Roma nel 1816, dove sono raccolte le memorie e i titoli de' libri pubblicati *exulante*, come dice l'autore, *societate*, e vi troverai tal copia di scrittori in difesa di Roma e del Papa che è una meraviglia. Uomini, anche secondo te, toccati dal Papa nel punto più delicato delle loro affezioni, eppure non solo pronti al sacrificio da lui voluto, ma fattisi di più in quella acerbità di tempi, per lui difensori e campioni niente meno zelanti e formidabili di prima. Questo, o caro, è l'elogio più compiuto, è il trionfo più glorioso della Compagnia soppressa, che ne fecero più amara la dispersione e sospirare l'universale ristabilimento, e il mondo avrebbe veduto questo ristabilimento molto prima del quattordici (Ex bulla *Sollicitudo* Pii VII) se la perversità de' tempi l'avesse permesso (2).

Ma se eran quegli ipocriti servitori de' Papi pronti a vendicarsi peggio che Luotero, perchè al nascere dello scisma, che seguì tra breve alla lor soppressione non

(1) Congr. Gen. xix. Decr. xi.

(2) Leggerai ivi, coll'indicazione delle opere, ex-Gesuiti quasi di ogni nazione che segnarono il loro zelo e divozione per l'augusto Capo della Chiesa: de' Fiamminghi Feller e Doyart, degli Svedesi il Thyulen, degli Inglesi Caroll e Plowden, de' Portoghesi il Novaes, de' Saraceni Sanna e Serra, degli Spagnuoli Nuix, Laguna, de Iturriaga, Gusta, Fuensalida, Abad, Chantre Adorno, de' Tedeschi Carrich, Haiden, Jung, Kleiner, Merz, Schönberg, Weith, Zallinger Becker Mayr, degli Italiani Bartoli Vinc., Bonola, Giorgi, Lazzeri, Brignole, Mozzi, Noghera, Bardarini, Muzzani, Zaccaria, Muzzarelli, Cernitori, del Giudice, Demarco, Bolgeni ec. Questi furono che bravamente a memoria de' nostri vecchi armeggiarono contro le fazioni giansenistiche e Germana capitanate dal Febronio e dai deputati di Ems, contro lo scisma di Utrecht, contro la novità di Pavia, di Brescia, di Genova, contro gli scandali di Pistoia; tali disciolti quali erano uniti, sempre tremendi agli avversarii, nell'amore alla Sede apostolica sempre i medesimi anche nella disgrazia, perciò odiati a morte dai partiti.



dottrina, di sì versante coscienza, si insolenti odiatori di Clemente, quegli avversatori (se dal modo che studii la nostra storia, fosti indotto a crederli tali) perchè mando, così tutti si mantennero fedeli alla sede romana, ed edificarono con la costanza ogni altra condizione di cattolici? — Perchè coloro stessi che abitavano domini della Russia, insistettero tante volte presso l'Imperatrice affinchè desse al Breve Pontificio, nè consentirono a mantenersi nell'esistenza di prima, finchè santa Sede non fece luogo a regolare derogazione dal Breve?

Perchè anzi fu tra loro chi stimò necessario di soddisfare alle ragioni pubbliche dal nobile Villegas, consolando il dolore de' cattolici, e giustificando la Compagnia dell'aver obbedito in un caso, dove tanti disapprovavano la sua sottomissione?

Ma il Breve imponeva a tutti altissimo silenzio; vietava non che i ricorsi e appelli formali diretti a sospendere o a riparare l'effetto della soppressione, ma per di scrivere, o anche sol di parlare in favore della Compagnia, o di qualunque cosa si riferisse alla sua sventura, *senza licenza del sommo Pontefice*. — Ora egli è possibile che tu trovi alcun *della Setta* il quale abbia osato parlare e scrivere, e l'abbia fatto per applaudire ai filosofi, ai politici, ai zelanti, che avevano ridotto il sommo Pontefice a quell'atto. Egli è possibile che tu abbi a denunziare qualche Gesuita, il quale abbia dubitato della necessità di implorare un'espressa licenza per usare del naturale diritto di difendere la sua riputazione e de' fratelli contro gli inde' maligni trionfanti. — Che ne inferiresti?

Anche prima di condannare l'individuo, che abbia disobbedito, non già persistere al Breve, ma per difendere la verità istorica e la propria riputazione, egli bisogna considerare fino a che tempo quel precetto potesse rimaner in vigore; perchè il comun senso di tanti ecclesiastici secolari e regolari, ai quali era fatto lo stesso vieto, già lo infirmava, era pur giusto che chi si credeva oppresso si giovasse della parola; e se anche parlando o scrivendo senza espressa licenza, e difendendo la Compagnia, e accusando i suoi nemici con quella passione di chi tratta la propria causa, una causa gravissima dove vede compromessa la giustizia, la religione, ogni principio di onore, venivan rispettati il nome, la coscienza, le intenzioni, le virtù personali del Papa; un'apologia, pubblicata sotto queste condizioni, non sarebbe ancora un fatto di Lutero, un oltraggio alla santa Sede.

Ma se le voci dell'infelice, che non sa rassegnarsi a perdere in uno co' suoi fratelli, e con la sua esistenza, e con le pie sue speranze, ancor la fama, ti paressero solenze sì imperdonabili — ricordati che la Compagnia non era più; nè la puoi pagartrice di tali colpe, ch'essa non aveva più modo d'impedire; ricordati che quella strettissima legge di obbedienza ch'era propria di lei, veniva disciolta, ed i suoi membri dispersi ridotti al diritto comune. — Che se l'operare de' Gesuiti dispersi non può da porgere argomento dello spirito, in che fossero stati educati, vedi dunque fosse l'operare dei più; la generosa loro obbedienza, la pazienza piena di mansuetudine e di dignità, il franco assoggettarsi ai nuovi superiori, il combattere di fianco co' nuovi compagni d'arme intorno al trono del Sovrano che li aveva umiliati, questo fatto universale ti condurrà a giudicare in buona logica se l'Istituto nostro fu di uomini veramente devoti alla Sede romana.

Piacesse a Dio, che quanti ci fanno da inquisitori intorno a questo sacro argomento, l'avessero sinceramente a cuore, e la Compagnia non loro sarebbe sì odiosa; non farebbero vanto del loro cattolicismo il proseguire contro di noi quel medesimo intreccio di calunnie, di violenze, di ipocriti artifizii, che assicurò la vittoria ai persecutori de' nostri Padri.

Come mai si risuscitano contro di noi le medesime imputazioni che nel passato si ripeteano dagli scritti di que' primi accusatori; e non si bada alla loro

romano ed alla fede cattolica?

Che cosa fu la distruzione de' Gesuiti in Portogallo per opera di Pombal? Ze-  
dell' onore e de' diritti di Roma?

Ti ha qualche sentore di pietà, o di santa morale, o di ossequio al comun Pa-  
dre della Chiesa il macchinarsi e lo scoppiare che fece la guerra contro i Gesuiti al-  
corte di Lodovico XV e ne' parlamenti?

Stia in petto a Carlo III il gran segreto depostovi da chi lo circondava; il pale-  
operar di costoro con Clemente XIII, e col suo successore, coi Gesuiti e con le tan-  
e sì infelici missioni, era esso ispirato da quel Cattolico liberalismo, che per rialzar  
ogni diritto invoca il nome del supremo Pastore?

Mi pare che quand' anche la deplorabile agitazione data da que' prepotenti al-  
Chiesa, avesse contribuito a sollecitare il progresso di qualche idea utile alla condo-  
degli Stati, e alla riforma delle cose ecclesiastiche, il pudore e la buona fede di c-  
prendesse a promuoverne il corso, esigerebbe tuttavia un'estrema severità a separar  
i malvagi principî, o a biasimarne gli abusi.

Ma no, perchè un nuovo ordine di cose sorse dall'estremo abuso del dispotism  
e della menzogna, si torna alla menzogna, e si applaude ai più violenti oppresso  
della Chiesa e del popolo, promettendo che per quella via debban le cose stabili rsi  
sempre più felice condizione.

La Chiesa però ed i popoli non lasciano di tenere gli occhi bene aperti sulla v  
per cui si vogliono condurre. — E loro è facile l'avvertire come i diritti vengano po  
in sicuro o minacciati. — E grazie a Dio, la sincerità di parecchi tuoi pari, svela t  
volta come da altri predicatori di civiltà, di riforme, di pace, di cattolicesimo si po  
per sorte violare ora l'equilibrio dei due poteri, ora l'istituto di Cristo, ora la libe  
dei popoli e della coscienza, ora il diritto de' privati e pubblici statuti, e sopratto  
la carità e la religione.

Anzi a riconoscere come siano posti o no al sicno tutti i diritti, la Chiesa ec  
fedeli hanno appunto per principale criterio il mantenersi o no al sicuro nelle sue  
lazioni co' Pastori, co' Principi, con le nazioni, l'autorità del Padre comune.

I Pastori locali spinsero oltre misura l'idea del diritto che loro compete di g  
dicare, d'insegnare, d'amministrare le cose divine; ma qualunque fosse l'oggetto  
l'apparenza del loro errore, loro convenne cedere, dacehè si guardò al sovrano  
ritto del Papa; o il contrastare, il resistere, il sottrarsi fu da sè solo criterio di  
sità, preludio di vergognose e funeste conseguenze. Allora potè accadere che i  
stori guadagnassero a sè i Principi, che si traessero dietro i popoli; ma sian mol  
sian potenti que' che si separano; non è cattolico, se non chi rimane congiunto  
capo della Chiesa; e i Pastori insubordinati cadranno in breve sotto il giogo de  
podestà civili.

Furon veduti a levarsi ancora alcuni Principi, appoggiati pur essi all'idea de  
ritti lor proprii. Gli oggetti, l'ampiezza, la giustizia di tali diritti potevano lasciare l  
go a varii contrasti, e ad un grande arbitrio. Ora se ne stimò offesa la dignità, la  
bertà del Clero; ora lo interesse, l'onore, il diritto de' cittadini — ma tutto può  
varsi agevolmente, finchè son salve le relazioni col Papa. Si rompano queste; il Cl  
ed il popolo sanno che cosa abbiano a pensarne — e se pure l'uno e l'altro parte  
passero alla medesima ribellione contro il supremo Pastore, e tutta una nazione fo  
trascinata dal suo Sovrano in un coi sacerdoti ad adorare servilmente la maestà  
lui; invece del Vicario di Cristo, da quel giorno istesso, com'è rotta l'armonia  
centro cattolico, è compromessa la stabilità dell'ordine civile, e un nuovo scisma s  
cederà tra la nazione ed il nuovo Pontefice, ancorchè cinto di spada concentri ne  
mani il doppio potere.

che invocano, la violenza o la moderazione con cui procedono, le discordie, gli zii, o le speranze a cui si abbandonano, tutto sta il pegno di felice successo nell'armonia che si serbi o si stabilisca con Roma.

Il popolo si ricorda egli di avere un Padre, che è padre parimente de' suoi sovrani e di tutte le nazioni?

Ascolterà parole di pace, e troverà un appoggio, un mediatore, un arbitro, sarà beato di rimettere tra le mani la propria causa. — Quel popolo all'incontro, quale vi si rifiutasse, o che dimentico, ignaro del principio cattolico, si facesse interprete e vendicatore de' suoi diritti naturali e civili senza rispetto a quelli del premo Pastore, per ciò solo dimostrerebbe agli occhi de' savvi, che qualunque condizione di cose ne sia per risultare di nobilissima e facilissima apparenza, in quai però, sotto più riguardi, son offese la giustizia, la libertà, la religione, e si sarà fabbricato un edificio rovinoso.

Ciò stesso hai tu dimostrato magnificamente a parere mio; e tu eri conscio dello stesso della virtù dialettica e conciliatrice, che è in questa dottrina, e che essa destare per la tua persona la simpatia di tutti i cattolici, di tutti i retti pensatori, e non meno usati a consultare la fede.

Ma l'idea sì cattolica, sì salutare de' diritti del comun Pastore, non può ancora venire esagerata così, che ne soffra l'armonia universale (1)?

Al sommo Pontefice possono competere varii diritti sopra l'universale reggimento dei popoli. — Quindi è possibile l'esagerazione di un diritto speciale; e poichè potrebbe esser se non a danno degli altri, coi quali deve bilanciarsi e compiere le attribuzioni dell'autorità propria dell'ufficio di Lui, basterà osservare se l'esercizio del suo potere cessi di essere ugualmente libero per ogni parte: e sarà manifesto che sotto apparenza di esaltare il Papa, si sia potuto insinuare un errore, che tenderà a rovinarne il trono.

Certo è, che l'esagerare il potere de' Papi nel governo politico e temporale delle nazioni, sarebbe funesto al Pontificato nell'ordine spirituale — in quanto l'uso moderato di tal potere provocherebbe i contrasti, la diffidenza, il disprezzo; e con ciò nell'opinione dei popoli la religione con le cose di terra, cesserebbero di averla, e quella che è, tutta celeste e divina, e sopra ogni lite.

O facessimo il Papa despota universale nell'ordine civile — o il potere civile volesse farla da Papa; da qualsiasi di questi assurdi seguirebbe del pari che la religione discendesse al cospetto de' popoli al valor di legge umana, e di ipocritica tirannia.

Ciò che parrà più strano, e torna tuttavia a dimostrare viemeglio come ancora col dare al Papa più che non vuole gli si tolga il tutto, si è l'esempio di chi per eccesso di amore da tanta devozione nell'attribuirgli la sovranità universale nelle cose esteriori non a volergli negar obbedienza nelle cose dell'anima.

Or non sarebbe a temersi un pericolo somigliante, ove dall'altra parte si esagerasse l'idea della sovranità spirituale? — Certo accesi l'amore di una sovranità moderatrice universale degli spiriti, chi guardi all'eccellenza di questa sola, conduce agevolmente a volerla tanto più efficace e distesa a dominare in alto sopra tutte le menti; — e poichè la sua eccellenza e la sua efficacia, ed il pregio che

(1) Merita di essere letta nel Battaglini (annali del sacerdozio e dell'impero tom. 1, 1609, num. marginale 12) l'utopia di Arrigo IV sopra una coalizione politica de' Principi d'Italia con alla testa il Papa, più ragionevole, certo meno pericolosa di tante utopie moderne.

fantasia passi a far voti per vedere tutto ad un tempo il potere del sommo Pontefice vestire la forma più spirituale che sia possibile, e farsi con quella più persuasivo, più augusto, più divino, più invulnerabile, più atto a custodire l'ordine delle idee, e ad imprimerlo sopra ogni forma di civiltà.

E che è mai fin qui, mi si domanda, onde sia a temere? Si rialzi il sacro potere in vigor di spirito; non è esso un voto legittimo di tutti i cattolici? Si rialzi per sublimità, vastità, valor di scienza; non è a bramarsi? Si rialzi per credito di virtù; non è suo istinto? Si levi in una parola sopra la sfera delle passioni, che consiste negli affari di terra, e come sarà più autorevole nel guidare le menti, così queste più illuminate e docili ai sensi religiosi governeranno le cose della terra con quella sapienza ed equità, che le volga al comun bene.

Così veramente si può procedere ragionando, non che senza tema d'errore, ma con sempre più belle speranze in favore della Chiesa e degli Stati. — Ma chi ritenga insieme ad ogni altro principio cattolico, e a' varii modi di accertare il vero nelle cose divine, quel criterio, che Cristo volle rendere più evidente agli occhi di tutti, riguarda al Papa. — E mentre non discerne per quali atti esso consenta a modificare la sua forma di essere e di operare, guarda per quali atti sia sollecitato da altri a darsi que' pregi tanto desiderabili pel suo migliore stato.

Ed è qui dove mi pare, che la cura posta in prima da te a salvare ogni diritto, a conciliare ogni cosa, a stabilire l'autorità Papale e la moderna civiltà in perfetta armonia, può essere di leggieri compromessa quando ti mostri associato di pensieri e di parole con tali uomini, i quali, tolta prima di te a far valere una causa somigliante, la disonorarono pur troppo con eccessi d'ingiustizia e di prepotenza.

Dovunque tu abbi letta la storia della caduta de' Gesuiti, e del come fu procacciata, ancorchè non l'avessi interrogata ugualmente da ambe le parti, che stavan in lotta, hai dovuto scorgere che con l'ipocrita professione di voler la Chiesa più pura, e più venerato il romano Pontefice, coloro, che si procacciarono in quella causa il trionfo, non dubitarono di far alla Sede Apostolica pubblici e moltiplicati insulti, finchè sperassero d'averla schiava ai loro voleri.

Sebbene non ti chieggo conto di ciò che tu abbi dovuto scorgere: — lo scorge il mondo cattolico, lo sanno benissimo gli eterodossi e gli increduli stessi — tutti gli uomini retti il confessano — gli uomini di mala fede nol possono pur dissimulare. — Clemente XIII prima, poi Clemente XIV furono assaliti con quanti mezzi più ingiusti e violenti può usurpare la prepotenza de' grandi per umiliare e sgomentare uomini di coscienza, ma inermi.

Ce ne compendia la storia con mirabile ingenuità quel medesimo C.<sup>to</sup> Alessio de Saint-Priest, ch'è forse il più garbato e trionfante fra gli scrittori, che siansi fatto pregio di lanciare un insulto alla Compagnia di Gesù. Egli è così tutto, a metterci in conto di gente da disperdere quando si voglia, che non si dà pur briga di guardare così dappresso all'onestà de' mezzi; — e vedete, dice, come ha fatto, chi volle; — e alza con infinita grazia il velo, e mostra, come Pombal poté ben meritare per dispotismo e crudeltà le sferzate di Voltaire — ma rioscì; e cacciò sei mila Gesuiti raccolti dal Portogallo, dalle Indie, dall'America sulle coste d'Italia. — Aggiunge che i Confessori Gesuiti alla Corte di Luigi XV, per testimonio della Pompadour istessa, non erano poi que' traditori della morale, che parevano ai Parlamenti, — ma i Parlamenti e la Dama e il Ministro volevano a dispetto del Papa, e poterono disperdere quattro mila Gesuiti, che non fecero il menomo fracasso. — Un potente di Spagna volle anch'esso, e gli bastò di insistere senza rispetto al sommo Pontefice con quei mezzi, che un Padre, e un Sacerdote non ha modo di respingere, e son altre migliaia di Gesuiti gettati là. — Così accade a Napoli, così a Parma, con sempre la pia inten-

distruggere tutti dal mondo intero? — La storia insegna come si fece, ed è lezione come possasi quando si voglia. Se non bastarono gli insulti, e le minacce come XIII si riuscì collo stringere con tanto maggior artificio, e violenza Clotilde XIV. Furon lunghi contrasti, una vera agonia, un immolare ogni senso di ragione, di giustizia, di religione; ma da un canto era tutta l'audacia, e l'arte degli intrighi, ed espugnò il Papa e i Gesuiti furon soppressi.

Per me dico in verità, che quando dopo letta questa esposizione (che sa per bisogno colorire le cose laide, e molte dissimularne sicchè non diano troppo noia) (1), mi vennero sotto gli occhi quelle parole di Montalembert: *j' aime mieux renvoyer à l'ouvrage récemment publiée par M. le Comte Alexis de Saint-Aulaire* — *Vous y verrez etc.* godei di trovarvi espresso il senso che a me ne rimaneva.

Io so che dal canto tuo sei lungi dal voler risuscitati i politici d'allora e consigli ai presenti una condotta così irriverente e detestabile.

Vedo anzi che a parer tuo, se i politici ed i filosofi del secolo passato immolarono il Pontefice romano, e si condussero a strappargli per vera violenza ciò che a lui pretendevano, quella dovette essere tutta colpa de' Gesuiti, e di quel loro egoismo per cui non consentivano ad annichilarsi così tosto come altri l'avrebbe voluto.

Sono di più convinto, che l'esistenza de' Gesuiti, se è un diritto per loro, gliela continua il volere del Papa, non è niente una necessità per l'esistenza della sua Chiesa.

Intendo benissimo che il pensiero onde sei governato nella presente questione è: potersi e doversi immolare la Compagnia, se non per altro, per ispianare al mondo de' politici, de' filosofi, degli eterodossi, una via di riconciliazione con la Sede Romana, fatta odiosa, o vile ai loro occhi, per l'odio e pel disprezzo in che hanno i Gesuiti, ch'essa finora protegge.

No, Gioberti, io non traviso le tue intenzioni; nè mi permetto di dedurre conseguenze remote od arbitrarie, per cui si possano snaturare i tuoi principii.

Ma resta, che di fatto se quei principii, se quelle intenzioni, tu le vesti e li giri in tal forma, che rinnova la memoria della più deplorabile e crudele insistenza fatta da uomini di mala fede e di sospetta religione nell'umiliare la Sede Romana, tu hai disonorato al cospetto di molti la causa, per cui avevi dapprima acceso l'entusiasmo (2).

(1) Vedi per ciò ancora *l'Histoire de la chute des Jésuites, au XVIII siècle, Réponse par M. Paul Lamache, Docteur en Droit, etc. Paris, 1845.*

(2) Intendo dire che tu a sostegno della tua invettiva contro noi ti fai scudo dell'opinione del Ven. Palafox. Il fatto di quel prelato ben lungi dal pregiudicarci, giova anzi mirabilmente alla causa nostra, e tu, secondo me, avresti fatto senno a non valertene né punto né poco per più ragioni:

1. Fossero anche stati i Gesuiti della *Puebla* quegli uomini sì rei pe' loro mali termini, il Prelato, che si suppone e non è provato, e che erano essi a paragone degli altri loro fratelli di ogni nazione amati, riveriti, cerchi da Pastori eminenti per santità e dottrina, come il mondo? Con qual giustizia o logica di discorso dovranno i molti sparsi per tutto essere e condannati in que' pochi ristretti nel circolo di una Diocesi? Ecco di nuovo alla *falsa e identis* abusata tanto.

2. Qualunque sieno quelle accuse del prelato e le sue lettere a Papa Innocenzo è un fatto, che non furono dalla Chiesa avute per sussistenti, perchè essa continuò l'amore, e la protezione alla Compagnia. Ne abbiamo in prova Brevi e Bolle quante ne cominciarono nello spazio di un secolo e mezzo sino al 1773, tutte in nostro favore, nessuna in rimprovero delle cose imputateci, molto meno a riforma.

3. Quelle accuse vertenti sopra punti di disciplina ecclesiastica, in cui il Prelato immolava gli interessi e i diritti episcopali in collisione coi privilegi de' missionari, potevano da lui essere mosse, salva la stima e l'amore alla Compagnia. Egli stesso nella *Difesa canonica* a Filippi



...ouerna, sia già maleudendo in un con quel sacrilego sistema de' romani, de' suoi  
seul, de' D' Aranda, de' Tanucci?

Di grazia, non volermi così assurdo; chè il dichiaro qui, l' odiosità dello scopo  
di costoro, non può essere partecipata dal tutt' altro scopo che tu proponevi.

Che segue adunque? Doversi avere i Gesuiti, come strumenti nati a promuovere  
la riconciliazione proposta tra il mondo ed il Papa, tra la civiltà ed il cattolicesimo?

Ho creduto di dichiarare altrove ciò che se ne possa pensare. — Qui dichiaro  
soltanto, che chi dubiti del conto in che possa averci per quest' impresa, è libero di  
pensarne ciò ch' esso creda più verisimile; sol che non esageri niente — nè la nostra  
incapacità, nè la nostra decisa vocazione a questo altissimo fine. — Mentre di fatto  
siam disposti ad accogliere, donde che ci vengano, i consigli e i lumi dell' esperienza  
e il dovere non c' è tracciato fuorchè dal Papa e dalle nostre costituzioni.

Ma se dico, che col combattere la Compagnia di Gesù sotto una bandiera diso-  
norata, tu hai potuto alienare molti uomini di senno e di cuore dal sistema, cui aveva  
creduto di raccogliere da' primi tuoi scritti, lo dico senza ombra di egoismo, lo dico  
senza riguardo alla Compagnia nè a me, — e per solo dolore del danno che possa  
risultarne alle speranze della Chiesa e della patria.

Già troppi hanno inteso quel tuo principio, che la colpa delle violenze o del dis-  
prezzo di cui la Sede romana e la Religione Cattolica possano diventare bersagli  
pegli uomini immoderati, abbia da essere più nostra, che non di loro. Deh! per l' a-  
nima tua, vedi dunque se tu che anticipi la scusa, e porgi il pensiero del delitto, tu  
per la tua parte non ne abbi a rispondere.

Già troppi hanno scorto quella tua logica, che direbbe: i Gesuiti paiono un in-

( Bullar. tom. 4. edit. Lugd. ) dice della Compagnia che è un *Istituto mirabile, dotto, utile,  
santo, degno di tutta la protezione non solo della Maestà vostra, ma di tutti i Prelati cat-  
tolici* ( V. Cretineau-Joly tom. 3. p. 336 ).

4. Fossevi stata anche per parte del Prelato dell' acerbità, dalla Puebla passato al veso-  
vado di Osma, compensò in bene tutto questo, e si valse dell' opera de' Gesuiti per la sua Di-  
cesi, specialmente nelle missioni ( Mendo Statera *opinionum* pag. 371 ). — Nelle sue *Semane  
espirituales* dice dell' Ordine: *e in Ispagna, in Italia e nelle altre regioni del mondo la p-  
religione di sant' Ignazio sconfisse con guerra atroce il comun nemico di tutti* ( Gloria post  
Soc. Jesu. Romae 1814 pag. 74. ). — Nell' altra sua opera *Directiones pastorales* si legge: *ut  
tur admodum Episcopus Soc. Jesu Patribus, quorum eruditio et perfectio et instituti natu-  
promptissima est et utilissima via, ut Episcopi magnam sui officii partem adimpleant* ( ib. ). —  
Accettò la dedica del libro *De doctrina ascetica* che il P. Nieremberg gli fece ( ib. ) — Nel  
suo testamento non ebbe riguardo di confessare ingenuamente, che forse per ignoranza av-  
contrastato con famiglie religiose ( Gonzalez de Rosende *in vita* ). Ed è a notare che non eb-  
solo contese coi Gesuiti, ma anche coi Francescani e Domenicani pei medesimi motivi ( V.  
detta *Gloria posthuma* ). Sopra queste querele di un fatto particolare fabbricavano Don Berna-  
dino di Cardenas e i giansenisti di Francia castelli in aria di accuse generali contro la Comp-  
gnia, che durarono un secolo a illudere ai semplici.

Ma e queste imputazioni come quelle del tirannicidio, del lassismo e altre già tante vol-  
te confutate, e pur dagli avversarii volute sempre rimettere in campo ( *malum, si può dire c-  
Tacito, quod vetabitur semper et retinebitur* ) sono a' dì nostri argomenti di niuna fede, in isp-  
cia dopo il fatto glorioso del ristabilimento della Compagnia. Poichè nè queste nè altre qu-  
rele, nè il pregiudizio stesso venutoci dalla soppressione impedirono Pio VII di confermarla  
come accennai sopra, la Compagnia nella Russia l' anno 1801, di richiamarla a vita nel R-  
gno delle due Sicilie l' anno 1804, di ristabilirla in tutto il mondo nel 1814, secondando  
voto universale, e credutosi obbligato in coscienza di venire a tale atto, com' egli si esprime  
nella Bolla. La pietà illuminata de' Prelati, il buon senso de' fedeli, specialmente dopo i lag-  
mevoli avvenimenti, che soppresso l' Ordine, afflissero la Chiesa tutta avevano seppellite e  
menticate queste imputazioni, fattone quel giudizio e sentenza che si meritavano. Ora tu ritor-  
a disseppellirle, traendo di sotto al soppediano dell' antichità questi miseri avanzi di vecchie  
giansenistiche e parlamentari. Ma oltre alle ragioni evidenti in contrario, che durano salde, e  
che le circostanze de' tempi, grazie alla civiltà, non sono più quelle di allora.

que si amplifichi, si aggravi, si estenda a tutto il corpo ogni ombra di peccato, notare nella condotta individuale di alcuno de' Gesuiti presenti, purchè cresciuto odio de' popoli contro di loro, la Chiesa torni a persuadersi, che il ben della vuole la lor distruzione.

— Ora la logica vera esigea, non già che si costruisse l'argomento per a della conseguenza voluta, ma prima si accertasse la verità delle premesse — e si rettificasse, col ricercarne la realtà e le cagioni, quell'anticipato giudizio che costituisce quale ostacolo al conciliarsi della politica umana col Cattolicismo.

Troppi infine han creduto di scorgere che in una questione dove si tratta di conciliare il libero attivarsi della ragione umana nel governo delle cose civili col religioso ossequio dovuto alla fede rivelata e all'autorità che ne è custode, interprete e dice su questa terra, la tua dialettica propendesse alquanto più a favorire il mondo che non la Chiesa. — E di fatto, avuto per buono il giudizio, che quello fa de' gesuiti, e concessogli, insegnatogli, datigli in mano i mezzi di vincere nel suo intento, chiamatagli in aiuto quella parte del Clero, che possa e voglia cooperarvi indistintamente, tu non hai riguardo in ciò nè al giudizio, che la Sede romana faccia al presente di questa sua milizia, nè al diritto che le competa di non volerla insultata, ma d'averne esaminata da sè medesima la causa, nè finalmente ai tutt'altri principii giusti i quali essa può credere necessario, e colpevole per parte del mondo l'antinonismo, che esista tra essa e lui.

Non voglio che ti venga imputata a passione o ad artificio l'eloquenza con cui combatti per atterrare la Compagnia. — Ma la morale, la logica, la dovuta onestà verso la Chiesa vi paion certamente sacrificate ad una illusione, e quel sacrificio sì inconcepibile già, o sì deplorabile dal canto d'un filosofo cattolico, torna troppo più sgraziatamente a rinnovare, quasi direi lo spettacolo di una lotta infame, ove l'umana prepotenza avvili già altra volta il romano Pontificato.

Chi ti seguirà, o Gioberti, sotto questi auspicii? Guarda d'attorno a chi sono quelli, che ti applaudiscono al presente, e ti spingono a proseguire per questa nuova via?

Sappi, che i Cattolici e i veri amici tuoi, coloro, che esultavano più sinceramente nella speranza di veder omai congiunti in inusata armonia civiltà e religione patria e la Chiesa, il Principe ed il Pontefice, coloro, che da te aveano imparato ad accoppiare questi oggetti nel medesimo culto del cuore, già si domandano se per raggiungere lo scopo de' voli comuni, non abbiano a cercare un'altra guida.

Deh! loro giovi sperare che fatto accorto del falso sentiero, e sol ritrattato pochi passi tu sii fra breve per riuscir loro tanto più degno di fiducia, seguendo il dirizzo d'una filosofia conciliatrice.

Genova, 30 ottobre 1845.

**DICHIARAZIONI AMICHEVOLI. Pag. 3 — 10.**

Amico di Gioberti e Gesuita, — quale uffizio assumo, — e con quali titoli d' idoneità, — e quale intento, — con quali cautele.

**RICOVERO DE' MENDICI, Pag. 10 — 13.**

Sensi di Gioberti intorno alla filantropia. — Predica del P.\*\*\*. — Opera del P. Guevarre.

**SARDEGNA; BATTELLI A VAPORE E STRADE. Pag. 13 — 14.**

I Sardi non conoscono la bestemmia. — Voti ed esortazioni de' Missionarii e de' Pastori. — vizio non è sequela necessaria del commercio, anzi lo corrompe. — Macchine a Vapore.

Saggi diversi di mezzi acconci ad agevolare ogni commercio (nota).

**ABOLIZIONE DEL FEUDALISMO IN SARDEGNA Pag. 14 — 16.**

Le difficoltà inevitabili non dovevano impedire l'impresa. — Uffizio e contegno del Sac. — dote — *Reddite, quae sunt Caesaris, Caesaris, et quae sunt Dei, Deo.* — Un abuso nomi gesuita, gesuitismo. — Missioni, — e come queste siano efficaci all' incivilimento dell' Isola.

**SCUOLE INFANTILI. Pag. 16 — 18.**

Predica d' un Padre in Genova — non *altrove*. — Aneddoto, che smentisce il reo senso postole. — *Seminatori di calunnie*, — tristo abuso di siffatta nota. — Opinioni estreme, l'una provoca l'altra. — Parole di moderazione del Sig. Cantù. — Revisori. — Via da giungere ad apprezzare saviamente le Scuole Infantili.

**CHI SEGUA DAI FATTI RECENTI FIN QUI ESPOSTI. Pag. 19.**

La Compagnia di Gesù non sarebbe oggi punto più dannabile di quello, che Gioberti l'aveva due anni fa.

**SANGUE SVIZZERO. Pag. 20 — 23.**

Chiamata de' Gesuiti a Lucerna, libera, legittima, e trattata con ogni riguardo. — Origine evidente della guerra civile, che tolse a pretesto questo fatto. Qual sangue versino i Gesuiti! sì il loro proprio, e sempre per sole cause gloriose alla Compagnia. — Quali i nemici di lei? se i veri, o i falsi amici della libertà.

**VERO STATO DELLA QUESTIONE. Pag. 23 — 24.**

Veri o falsi, o quali si sieno i fatti recenti appostici da Gioberti, egli ne toglie occasione di accusare la Compagnia siccome viziata nell' intimo suo essere e ab antico. — Io accetto la questione ancor sotto questo aspetto — e qui pure mi vale in parte la qualità di testimone domestico della Compagnia — e in quanto la mia testimonianza può esser sospesa, offro le debite guarentigie. — Ad ogni modo io soddisfo alla mia coscienza. — Chi si giudica, badi alla sua.

**SETTA GESUITICA, E COMPAGNIA DI GESÙ. Pag. 25 — 26.**

La Compagnia è un corpo da sé. — Le sue relazioni fuori di sé o sono di organizzata dissonanza — o semplice consonanza di principii. — Gioberti riconosce che gli atti delle persone dirette dai Gesuiti non sono imputabili alla Compagnia, se non in quanto siano mossi da principii ch' essa insegna. — Per altra parte così i principii, ch' essa insegna, o che le sono supposti, possono esser comuni a molte persone affatto aliene da lei — o non punto sottoposte alla sua direzione. — L' oggetto adunque, di cui Gioberti parla non sarebbe acciamente determinato — tanto meno per chi ne venisse ad intendere, che il Gesuitismo è il complesso di tutti gli elementi di stoltezza, di ipocrisia, di fanatismo, — e siano acciati alla Compagnia tali uomini appunto, che in virtù di quegli elementi sarebbero i meno sociabili, i meno logici a procedere per principio, i meno docili a lasciarsi condurre. Neppure sono da imputarsi alla Compagnia gli atti de' suoi individui, se non in quanto cedano da' principii, onde si costituisce. — Onde giova considerare la Compagnia quale è costituita dalla Chiesa — e solo cercare se si discosti ne' fatti da ciò che la Chiesa la vuole.

**CONGREGAZIONI. Pag. 26 — 27.**

Commendate da più Sommi Pontefici. — Erane stato membro Benedetto XIV. — Leone XIII le rimette tra le mani della Compagnia — la quale non è pur sola a governarle. — Il suo scopo è tutto religioso. — Di quali persone constano — e come vi siano promossi i frutti di ogni virtù.

*Pellico.*



mendicare per fini umani.

**IGNORANTI, FANATICI, IPOCRITI, ecc. Pag. 29 — 33.**

Non sono tali tutti quelli, che hanno ricorso ai nostri Ministeri; — nè il vizio di cotale mini, quando si accostino a noi, ci disonora. — Li conduce un istinto, che vuol esser studiato — Guai chi giunga a ridurre la Compagnia in abbiezione; — caduta lei gli ignoranti, i fanatici, gli ipocriti passeranno sotto la bandiera vincitrice — e già durante il conflitto si dividono per varie parti. — Cenni sopra ciò che fu veduto al tempo della depressione della Compagnia. — Che risulti da' suoi Archivi depredati? — Che sia a fare certe tempe d'uomini.

**DIFFERENZA ULTIMA. Pag. 33 — 36.**

Gioberti la pone in un antagonismo politico.

**GESU' CRISTO E LA COMPAGNIA RISPETTO ALLA CIVILTÀ. Pag. 36 — 48.**

Idea del Sacerdozio Cristiano. — Pastorale — Monastico — Apostolico o Militare. — Tutte queste forme esprimono e proseguono l'opera di Gesù Cristo — Una di esse più specialmente s'accosta alla maniera, con che egli medesimo trattò ed operò. — Che ne segua rispetto alla Compagnia, e alle relazioni di questa col mondo. — Se la Compagnia si professi apostolica, deve modificarsi conforme al secolo. — Rispondo, l'armonia tra il Sacerdozio e il secolo non può volersi per ogni rispetto — ma ottiensi al possibile dalla Chiesa per mezzo di varii istituti religiosi, de' quali altri hanno forma più universale, e però più accomodata a maggior varietà di tempi e di luoghi, ma perciò stesso più invariabile, nè da dover si limitare ad alcuna specialità, altri sorgono secondo l'occorrenza più determinati a soddisfar bisogni speciali, ma perciò stesso meno mutabili nell'esser loro, fuorchè col succedersi a vicenda. — Ordine di S. Benedetto. — Ab. Casareto. — Pio VII — Fratellanza degli Ordini religiosi. — È luogo, oltre alla forma Monastica, alla forma Apostolica. — La Compagnia partecipa all'essere degli Ordini di Apostolato universale. — In quest'essere ha modo sempre armonizzare con la civiltà — cioè di supplire ai rinascenti bisogni di questa per l'opera della Religione. — Sotto questa forma la Compagnia ritrae in sé alcuna somiglianza con Cristo. — Quindi come Cristo diventa oggetto di contraddizione. — Ma non per questo dee mutarsi. — Del resto non esclude chi giovi altrimenti — e non è dritto, che escluda lei. — Cristo volle patir contrasto; perchè? — Non per altro avviene, che debba esser tribolata ancora la Compagnia — *Ut revelentur ex multis cordibus cogitationes*. — Più, perchè l'opera della Redenzione richiede una vittima — e quest'essere di vittima, che è Cristo, si partecipa ai suoi sudori ancora. — Nè la Compagnia, nè la Chiesa possono rinunziare a questa partecipazione. — *adimpleo (\*)*, *quae desunt passionum Christi*.

**CATTOLICISMO E GESUITISMO. Pag. 48 — 51.**

Come riesca Gioberti a metterli in opposizione. — Gran pro di certe imputazioni a ingenui sospetti odiosi — tanto più ora che non è luogo ad altre. — Si dicano i Gesuiti ipocriti, egoisti — ed eccoli in contrasto col Cattolicismo. Ma seguono alcune assurdità ingiuriose fatali alla causa Cattolica. — Sconsigliare Gioberti a pensarvi più seriamente.

**EGOISMO E INDIPENDENZA. Pag. 52 — 65.**

Chè cos'è Egoismo? — Individuale — Sociale — e questo o del Capo — o del Comune. — In nessuna maniera egoismo può dominare nella Compagnia. — Il disinteresse del Gesuita è quello che ispira al mondo egoista il sospetto d'un interesse nascosto e contrario ai suoi. — Meritiamo il rimprovero d'averci per necessari. — Questo fa oltraggio alla Chiesa. — Ma noi ci abbiamo per necessari, ma impegnati a qualunque servizio. — Amore del proprio bene, — è presso di noi tanto meno esagerato, quanto viviamo in minor isolamento, e abbiamo a cuore la difesa di tutti gli Ordini Religiosi. — Ma la predilezione dell'Istituto proprio è in sé legittima virtuosa, e promette alla Chiesa e al mondo Religiosi osservanti.

Dritto di essere — e di attendere alla propria conservazione — al proprio reggimento. — Relazioni de' corpi religiosi con le società civili — quanto all'introdursi — al mantenere — all'operare — all'insegnare.

**IPOCRISIA E MANEGGI. Pag. 65 — 73.**

Caratteri ambigui di ipocrisia. — Carattere solo vero, cui è a guardare. — Che s'intenda di maneggi? — Se sotto velo di virtù si scopra nella Compagnia vizio di ambizione — cupidigia — oppressione degli innocenti. — Gioberti — Bessone — Dottori — Lamennais — Comunisti — Dottrine — Equivoci — Riuscire ai fini — Mezzi evangelici sconosciuti, impossibili al mondo, e in vero onnipotenti. — Ora meno, che mai la Compagnia può esser sospetta di intrighi. — Scritto di Grégoire. — Istinto ai sospetti — Proposta ai nostri detrattori. — Le loro obiezioni politiche, s'inquietano del vederli governare con religiosa cautela. — Giudizio di

(\*) *Nell'opera per isbaglio è suppleo.*

mente ogni privato dottore può starsene a certificare ciò che Gioberti accenna intorno Probabilismo e al Molinismo. — Propongo a considerare il principio, i metodi, i frutti delle dottrine Teologiche sostenute dalla Compagnia. —

Principio, cui si può riferire così il Probabilismo, come il Molinismo — loro legittimi confini — Probabilismo — non si può dire dottrina delle nostre scuole. — Il Lassismo troppo — Molinismo, difeso, ma non decretato, nè insegnato universalmente dalla Compagnia. — Così il sistema di Molina, come la dottrina del probabile sono opinioni libere per i Cattolici — niente più sospette di eresia, che le opinioni opposte — e amiche del più libero svolgersi dell'attività umana difesa dai Pontefici con censure contro gli oppositori (non).

Metodi. — Non furono sole la Polemica e la Casuistica — Suarez — Bellarmino, Fagnano, ec. — Pregi della Polemica, e suo polarsi successivo — Memorie di Trévoux. — Necessità impostane dagli avversarii — Esempi. — Pascal e le sue Provinciali. — Riti Casuistici — Pregi della Casuistica — il metodo non è quello, che rese fallibili i Moralisti.

Frutti — in ordine alla morale — al dogma — al carattere di santità. Nè tuttavia la Compagnia lasciò di fruttificare per tanti altri modi di studi e d'opere — così a pro della Chiesa, come della Chiesa.

#### **MISTICITA', CULTO ESTERIORE. INDIRIZZO DELLE ANIME. Pag. 87 — 90.**

Siamo d'accordo con Gioberti intorno ai principii — ai suoi sillogismi falla la minore. Processioni di Treviri e Ronge (nota). — Agiografia (nota). — Oggetti speciali, in cui si è segnalata la pietà della Compagnia. — Due libri danno l'idea della nostra Ascesi — Esercizii di S. Ignazio — Contraddizione tra i volerci Molinisti o Probabilisti, e intenzioni stretti e servili di cuore nelle cose di Religione. — La Compagnia cooperò a far prevalere una forma di pietà riflessiva, pratica, socievole. — Congregazioni — S. Francesco Sales. — Pietra di paragone, chi la tiene in mano. — Elogio dell'indirizzo spirituale della Compagnia nel recente decreto per l'introduzione della causa di Beatificazione del V. P. Pignatelli, 1842 (nota).

#### **LA PATRIA ED IL GESUITA. Pag. 91 — 99.**

Il Sacerdizio in generale non solo è stromento di civiltà, ma si stringe all'essere di ciascuno stato. — Cenno di lode ai Parrochi (nota). — Altre le relazioni locali de' sacri Pastori, oltre quelle de' religiosi — ma gli uni e gli altri sono *in solidum* benemeriti della repubblica. — Morte civile del religioso — è un sacrificio, al quale la patria non dovrebbe essere ingrata. — Capo straniero. — Servigi. — Proteste del Gesuita alla patria.

Vengo ai principii. — Individualità Nazionale. — Da tenersi in armonia con la società universale. — Anelli estremi — individuo ed unità Cattolica — concentramento ed espansione. — Sacra Gerarchia, tipo della gradazione delle attinenze sociali. — Problemi fatti solo intorno alle attinenze del Gesuita e della patria. — Sacerdizio di universale Apostolato. — Come costituitosi in questi ultimi secoli — e apprezzarne l'opera. — Forse che non basti all'uopo la sola Gerarchia Pastorale? — All'intero concetto della Gerarchia richiedendo il Capo, questo importa con sé come membra della sola sua persona quanti gli occorrono strumenti e sussidii all'esercizio del suo universale primato. — Tendenza della civiltà rispetto alla condizione de' Pastori locali. — Compenso o correttivo mantenuto dalla tendenza della Chiesa ad attivare l'Apostolato universale per mezzo de' grandi corpi religiosi. — La civiltà ne avrà tanto pro quanto gliene torva dal dogma eminentemente sociale dell'unità Cattolica.

#### **PRINCIPII DI EDUCAZIONE CIVILE. Pag. 99 — 108.**

Scala de' diversi gradi di civil coltura a' quali la Compagnia si seppe proporzionare. — Fatti d'Europa — In Europa negli stati cattolici — negli stati eterodossi o liberi. — Esempi recenti (nota). — Come il Gesuita intenda e predichi e guarentisca il progresso a seminare miglior esser civile. — Un concetto più ristretto non conviene alla sua missione — ma che universale offende chi restringe le proprie mire. — Questioni di fatto rispetto ai principii esposti. — Decreto del P. Aquaviva contro il solo trattare di tirannicidio — parole di Arrigo IV — e condotta di parecchi principali Gesuiti rispetto alla *Lega*. — Ristorazioni. — Conflitti — via ad un giudizio equo sopra la posizione, i doveri, la condotta della Compagnia in questi ultimi tempi. — Effetti delle fazioni esagerate e delle mutue diffidenze come si trovino alleate la Religione e la Compagnia coi diritti antichi e vigenti — Gerarchismo e sua etimologia politica — Cattolicismo Antigesuitico e sua direzione — La Compagnia si rimane fedele ai principii cattolici — nè deve giovare altrimenti. — L'Austria e la Compagnia (nota).

#### **SCUOLE E CONVITTI. Pag. 108 — 127.**

Varii i sistemi di educazione seguiti dalla Compagnia ne' varii paesi. — Se sia giusto il rimproverarle di non far qui ciò ch'essa fa altrove.

pre d'ingegno, e alle varie vocazioni. — Quindi fluttuazione tra due sistemi principali. — Intanto non sono paghi né gli zelatori delle buone lettere, né coloro che mirano all' utile pratico ed immediato. — La Compagnia applaude ai primi, e con essi per questa parte al Sig. Thiers, — ma per ora deve altresì concedere il possibile al comune de' padri di famiglia. — Come si vogliano rialzare le Scuole di Latinità — e a ciò valga e s'adoperi per suo istituto ancor la Compagnia, quando le circostanze il comportano. — I dotti non confortano a sacrificare la classica letteratura ad una utilità, cui non mancano provvedimenti. — Parole di Vossio e ragioni per serbare la lingua Latina qual mezzo di più pronta ed universale diffusione delle scienze (nota). — La Compagnia è lungi dall' invidiare le Scuole speciali — forse diverranno più speciali anche le sue. — Metodo naturale — Età della memoria, e delle lingue — Ragioni scientifiche e morali in favore delle lingue antiche. Età dell'immaginativa e della letteratura. — Via al mondo interno e spirituale. — Età della ragione, e della filosofia. — Ma tutto questo corso non dee essere più che preliminare alla scala. — Problema intorno alla misura delle cognizioni convenienti a questo corso, a differenza de' corsi superiori di lettere e di scienze. — Chi lo abbia da sciogliere. — Problema del come un metodo analogo al corso della natura e delle età si possa seguire nelle scuole destinate ai fanciulli appartenenti alle classi commercianti e laboriose. — Difficoltà. — Come ne segua?

*Insegnamento religioso — e Disciplina* — Come procedano in Savoia, in Svizzera, in Belgio — in altra forma niente meno lodevole in Italia. — Parole di S. Francesco Borgia intorno al non caricare i giovani di pratiche religiose. — Tipo imitato nel pri-riaprirsi de' Convitti in Italia. — Modificazioni successive. — Delazione. — Regola di carità fraterna e d'umiltà religiosa non applicabile al caso (nota). — Fiacchezza e abbassamento d'animo. — Attività della mente — Ginnastica. — Altri Convitti di educazione retti da Religiosi. — Gioberti doveva una qualsiasi riparazione (\*) — Causa comune a PP. Barnabiti e Scolopi e la Compagnia. — Vantaggio della varietà e della libera educazione — sotto gli occhi e la scorta della Chiesa cattolica. — Gelosa custodia dell'indipendenza. — Legge di giusti confronti. — Educazione pubblica o domestica. — Via di mezzo ne' Convitti italiani. — Il gran torto d'essere amati da' nostri allievi. — Vocazioni religiose tra i giovani. — Come maneggiate. — Cenno del Botta. — Amor filiale, secondo la religione, messa in opera ne' Convitti. — Corrispondenza co' parenti. — Varie riuscite felici — la più deplorabile; colpa di chi? — Allievi illustri — a chi la lode? — qualche ne tocca meno, tanto è più dimostrato l'obbligo de' parenti. — Concerto nelle mire nell'opera dell'educazione — donde è a procacciare. — Lettera inedita di Carlo Emanuele II (nota). — Pegni presenti.

SCIENZE, LETTERE, ARTI, ecc. Pag. 128 — 150.

Apostolato della Compagnia, come inteso dalla Chiesa nel costituirlo, — dovere e diritto corrispondente. — Scuole non usurpate, sì sopraggiunte, moltiplicate. — Debito ed omaggio della Compagnia verso l'Università di Parigi, e le altre donde uscirono i suoi primi. Il merito de' letterati e dei dotti de' secoli passati deesi misurare con quello de' loro contemporanei. — Due imprese principali della Compagnia rispetto agli studi.

1.° *Ratio studiorum*. Formazione di questo codice — modificato a' nostri giorni. — Tutti i punti di esso. — Sta in mano di chi deve por mente alle circostanze. — *Ratio sciendi et docendi* del Jouvency. — Gratitudine di parecchi allievi illustri. — B. Calaneo Barberigo e il Seminario di Padova. — Bacone. — Leibnitz.

2.° *Lavori classici, Imprese scientifiche, ecc.* In ordine alla grammatica, e alla filologia in generale. — I poemetti. — Strozzi e Redi. — Altri cantori del cioccolato. — Versi generi. — Boscovich. — Noceti ecc. lodati cantori dei fenomeni celesti. — S. Biowski, Masenio, Spee, Vanière, Rapin, Desbillons. — Si cercano poeti o professori? Fra i Latinisti e i Grecisti guarentiscono la bontà delle loro scuole i Maffei, Sacchini, Rue, Lagomarsini, ecc. — Dante ed i Gesuiti. — Bettinelli e suoi colleghi di varie età. Condizione della poesia. — Son altri pregi e doveri secondo le età e gli ufficii. — Letteratura. — Suoi pregi e confini. — Servigi della Compagnia in ordine a questa. — Come in essa coltivi i giovani, e ragioni del suo metodo nello studio degli antichi classici. — Più a proposito son qui da rammentarsi le edizioni e le versioni. — Intorno ai classici

(\*) Nell'opera pag. 267 linea 22 leggi così: e rettifico così ingenuamente, in che re-  
doversi, i proprii giudizi, come gli altrui.

Torino e di Parigi. — Altre edizioni di classici de' PP. Lacerda, Brohier, Radero, ecc. — Lavoro inedito, ma conosciuto del P. Lagomarsini ( nota ). — Eloquenza sacra. — Scritture morali ed ascetiche. — Cenno del Giordani sopra *l' arte della perfezione cristiana* del Pallavicini. — Storia. — Varii scrittori celebri in questa parte. — *Lettere edificanti e curiose*. — Collezioni di monumenti. — Memorie di *Trévoux*. — Educazione letteraria de' nostri giovani religiosi. — Specialità. — Ma quale il fine comune? — Dall' aver raggiunto questo è a stimarsi il merito d'ogni lavoro letterario e scientifico della Compagnia.

Scienze. — matematiche. — Testimonianze di Montucla, Leibnitz, Lalande. — Osservatorii. — Stimolo dato dalla mira alle Missioni. — Proventi scientifici di queste ( note ). — Lavori di circostanza. — Opere d'arti, e varii servizi di pubblica utilità ( note ).

Lettere e scienze sacre. — Edizioni. — Gius canonico. — Sacra scrittura. — Teologia specolativa. — Ultimi Teologi all'epoca della soppressione.

Studii attuali della Compagnia. — Computo degli anni — bisogna dar tempo al tempo ( nota ). — Alcuni autori recenti in varii generi di scienza e di lettere. — Omaggio al Card. Mai. — Alcuni trattati di filosofia.

FILOSOFIA IN PARTICOLARE. Pag. 150 — 154.

Scopo determinato del corso preliminare di filosofia — scopo superiore del corso speciale che la Compagnia assegna a' suoi giovani religiosi. — Campo ulteriore. — Confini tra le opinioni — Criterio *ab intrinseco* — *ab extrinseco* — questo solo poteva esser determinato dal *Ratio studiorum* — ed è con la possibile latitudine. — Vantaggi dello starsi alle opinioni comunemente insegnate nelle Università cattoliche. — Altro è però l'insegnare — altro il meditare — e il pubblicare le proprie meditazioni come privato filosofo. — Sotto questo sistema sorse il Suarez. — Transizione ad un'epoca novella nelle scuole. — Aristotelici e Platonici. — Vico alle nostre scuole.

Concorso di varie facoltà ed operazioni in filosofia. — Non sempre armonico — vince la sottigliezza di analisi e che ne avvenga. — I teologi rialzano la filosofia con un lavoro più sintetico. — Esempi. — Facoltà inventiva. — Ha essa luogo in filosofia? — Non può essere che un grado superiore di vista sintetica o conciliatrice. — L'esercizio di questa è favorito dalla norma che abbiamo nel *Ratio studiorum*. — Vi si oppone in parte l'influenza delle opinioni in ciascun'epoca dominanti. — Loro alterni periodi. — Possibile neutralità di uno spirito vigoroso. — L'innovare, o il risuscitare l'antico non è sempre vigor d'un ingegno, ma ardimento ed eloquenza ad esprimer il sentire comune d'un'epoca stanca delle esagerazioni passate.

Fatto perpetuo della libertà professata dalla Compagnia rispetto alle opinioni. — Non occorre chiederle un filosofo novatore. — Ha fatto meglio sforzandosi di prevenire le esagerazioni. — Del resto non ha mancato alle occasioni. — Il trionfo dell'incredulità del secolo passato non prova la debolezza dei filosofi Gesuiti. — Alcuni loro sforzi recenti travisati o sdegnati. — Bando alle questioni personali. — Via ad una conclusione. — Un fatto da esaminare.

DECADENZA DEGLI STUDI NEL SECOLO XVIII. Pag. 154 — 159.

Certifico e determino il fatto di questa decadenza — rispetto alla letteratura e alla teologia. — Come vi partecipò la Compagnia?

Gli studi scientifici scemano la gloria letteraria. — È questo un danno? — Via a garantire in pratica il possibile vantaggio di una nazione così per opera delle lettere, come delle scienze e delle arti. — Questa via non fu perduta di mira dalla Compagnia. — Suo insegnamento letterario, filosofico, corsi superiori. — Influenza de' modelli nazionali, ove si trascurino gli antichi. — Lingua volgare favorita pure dalla Compagnia pel pro del suo apostolato. — Lingue francese ed italiana. — Francesismo — assenza di idee — imitazioni — inerzia — scetticismo ecc. — Che colpa ha la Compagnia in ciò? — Suoi lavori polemici, altro il merito letterario degli Apologisti cattolici, altro de' filosofi erranti. — Sacra oratoria non era in tanta decadenza. — Letterati ed eruditi della Compagnia quando venne soppressa. — Testimoniaza di Filippo Bonamici.

Teologia — Berruyer, come giudicato da' Gesuiti, e solo. — Il secolo stanco della disputa del Giansenismo; tendeva a rinnegare perfino la ragione. — Si dovea forse procedere con esso per via di autorità? — Due forme principali della teologia. — La Compagnia ripigliava quella degli antichi Apologisti — nè tuttavia abbandonava nelle scuole il metodo proprio di queste ( nota ). — Prove di solido studio. — Erudizione in Gius Canonico. — La Croix, Biner ecc. tra i moralisti e canonisti. — Azevedo e Fabio Danzetta collaboratori di Benedetto XIV. — Zaccaria sotto Pio VI e col Cardinal Pacca. — Fuenzalida, Muzzarelli, Faure ed altri che trattarono argomenti speciali. — Barruel e Gusta. — Arevalo — Feller e l'Anti-Febonio. — Studi biblici. — Conclusione — I due perni de' buoni studi.

OBEDIENZA CIECA E VALOR INDIVIDUALE — E COME AL POTER MENO IN OPERE SUPPLISCA IL PATRE PIU'. Pag. 159 — 169.

sistema di educazione. — Via per giungere a giudicare del sistema della nostra. — Principi, regola di obbedienza, non disgiunti da quelli di generosità e di prudenza. — Qualità nel novizio. — Sua educazione — relazioni — viaggi ec. — Motivi e confini dell'obbedienza. — Sfera propria della prudenza.

Il Gesuita ha riguardo ai varii oggetti rispetto ai quali è semplice suddito, o per rapporto a qualche superiorità, o ha l'obbligo d'illuminare la prudenza de' superiori. — Natura dell'obbedire per acquistare discernimento, carità, imparzialità, fermezza. — *Erat sibi* — *proficiebat sapientia et gratia*. — L'obbedire all'uomo per riguardo a Dio, quanto sopra ogni servilità, anzi sopra il comune concetto di naturale indipendenza. — L'obbedienza che si dice cieca non può essere virtù disgiunta da ogni discernimento. — Altra la prudenza come complesso d'ogni virtù. — Altra la perfezione propria di ciascuna virtù particolare richiedendosi atti proprii di quella sola. — Armonia tra la prudenza dei superiori, e l'obbedienza de' sudditi.

— Fatto dell'obbedienza gesuitica. — Tipi proposti da Gioberti — ci fanno onore. — Natura della somiglianza tra i nostri missionarii. — Prospetto delle missioni attuali della Compagnia. — Missioni in Europa. — Altro campo all'attività e al senno del Gesuita. — Creazioni. — Bellarmino, Tolet. — Libertà e grandezza di un sacrificio di tutta la vita. — Fermezza nel perseverare. — V'ha tal altra tempra nobilissima di anime, che a spiegare più liberamente le facoltà più belle abbisogna di porsi per altre parti sotto l'altrui tutela. — *Se i Gesuiti padroni del loro pensiero* ec. — Rispondono le biblioteche — le discussioni teologiche qualunque sia stata l'opinione dei superiori. — Censura degli scritti da darsi alle stampe. — Principio di moderazione, come giovi al vero.

L'obbedienza religiosa non può essere giudicata dal mondo, — perchè tuttavia ne contrasta con esso. Compenso a' suoi contrasti e ai suoi dispregi. — Ciò che non possiamo conseguirci con l'opera ci è dato di conseguirlo in grazia della cura, che altri prende di ingrandirci darci in ispettacolo. — Cresciutane la devozione alla santa Sede — fattane più evidente la della Chiesa cattolica — provocato il discernimento de' politici — manifestato il corso delle fazioni. — Gli eretici non lasciano per noi di convertirsi (nota) — più equi ne' loro giudizi, che molti Cattolici alla moda (nota). — Stima e lodi che fanno di noi (nota).

OSSEQUIO VERSO LA SANTA SEDE. Pag. 169 — 180.

I Gesuiti nell'amore verso la santa Sede, creduti anzi eccedere nel troppo che nel poco — voluti calunniare di disubbidienza al Papa — riti cinesi quanto male a proposito adottati — soppressione. — I Gesuiti da Clemente XIV al presente Gregorio XVI non han ricevuto favori e grazie — nessun rimprovero che dimostri questa disobbedienza — con quanto rispetto sono sottomessi al Breve — zelo degli Exgesuiti nel difendere la Chiesa ed il Papa — per ciò tolta dalla biblioteca degli scrittori (nota). — Istanze de' Gesuiti nella Russia perchè non corso al Breve. — Il fallo di qualche individuo non si potrebbe ascrivere a tutti gli altri — tanto meno alla Compagnia che più non era — qualità degli accusatori de' Gesuiti — se erano amici di Roma. — Unione col centro del cattolicesimo nell'equilibrio de' poteri necessaria per tutelare i diritti de' Principi e dei popoli — esagerata, e tolto l'equilibrio sono compromessi gli interessi di tutti — anche della Chiesa — come fu trattato il Papa dalle Corti — dai ministri nell'affare della soppressione e dopo — l'iniquità de' mezzi usati allora dai ministri non può essere onestarsi neppur con altro scopo dal loro — nè sarebbe buona souse l'esempio del loro (nota). — Conclusione.

***pag. lin. leggi***

48. 33 i quali soli  
49. 19 cui potresti  
53. 18 principale  
» 31 resse il tutto  
55. 28 come scuola  
56. 41 con questo  
58. 31 più generoso  
64. 20 procedono  
69. 1 nè v'è empio  
84. 30 medesima proporzione  
85. 3 savi insegnamenti

***pag. lin. leggi***

87. 1 temer rimprovero  
91. 31 si riparte  
94. 41 non avrebbero  
95. 3 sicchè  
98. 5 pii ministeri  
» 13 precorsi  
100. 39 che ora  
103. 23 accordare  
106. 4 che si qualificò  
110. 46 o meno alto a  
114. 9 alcun titolo

*A. S.*







PREZZO, GRANA 80.











